Gender / Racial Constraints in Media

Representation of women in the media in Southern Africa

A study by MISA (http://www.misa.org/) analysed 25,100 news items broadcast and printed during September 2002 by 116 media in 12 southern African countries. It concluded that the media in southern African give very little space to the views of women, and, when it comes to subjects such as politics, economy, sport or agriculture, their voice is virtually unheard.

This problem will need to be addressed and changed if development is to occur, as women have an influential role in the home and the upbringing of children, influencing the values and practices of the next generation.

Empowerment and Participation of Migrants and Refugees in the Media

http://www.multicultural.net/empowerment_results.htm#survey reports how a workshop invited representatives of migrant and refugee organisations to explore ways to realise and make better use of contacts with the media.

A representative of the Bulgarian NGO Human Rights Project (HRP) stated that through its 'Training, Media and Advocacy' programme, the HRP promotes a greater participation and fairer representation of the Roma in the Bulgarian media (http://www.multicultural.net/newsletter/article/issue5-angelova.htm).

Literacy Levels of Target Audiences

The literacy rates of the community will affect the type of communication technology most suited to them. If this is analysed before-hand, then information has a greater chance of reaching those in need, and development will advance.
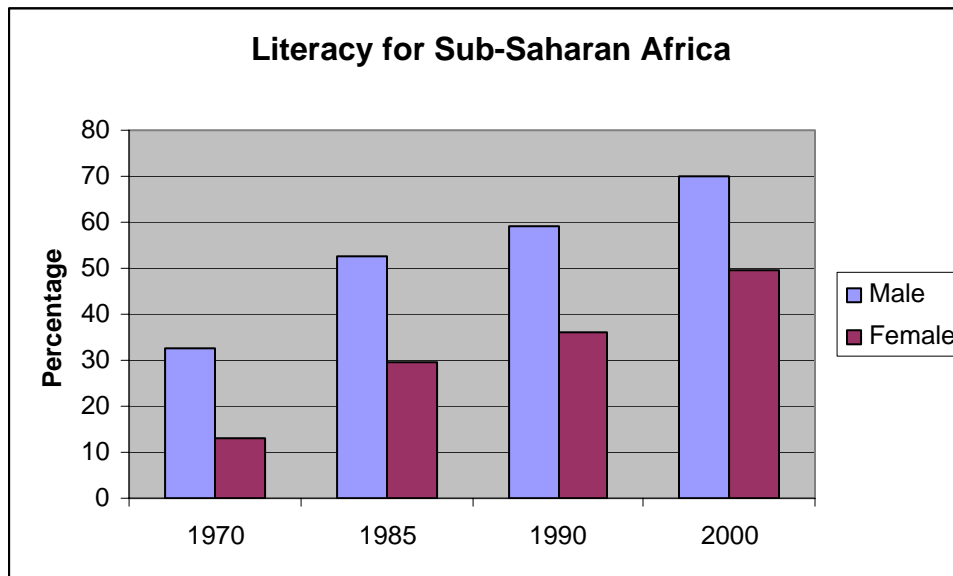
http://www.dfid.gov.uk/AboutDFID/Education/research/library/html/dep06e/ch18.htm#2.7.2%20literacy%20and%20development

Estimated Adult Literacy Rates by Sex 1970-2000 (percentages)

	Male				Female				Total		
	1970	1985	1990	2000	1970	1985	1990	2000	1970	1985	1990	2000
World	69.6	78.1	80.6	84.6	53.5	63.1	66.4	71.8	61.5	70.6	73.5	78.2
Developing Countries	57.8	71.1	74.9	80.3	32.6	49.9	55.0	63.2	45.3	60.7	65.1	71.9
Sub Saharan Africa	32.5	52.6	59.0	70.2	13.2	29.5	36.1	49.6	22.6	40.8	47.3	59.7
Arab States	39.5	59.2	64.3	73 1	13.7	31.5	38.0	50.6	26.5	45.5	51.3	62.0
Latin America/Caribbean	77.5	84.3	86.4	89.7	70.1	80.3	83.0	87.3	73.8	82.3	84.7	88.5
Eastern Asia	67.3	82.0	85.7	90.0	38.7	60.7	66.4	75.4	53 2	71.5	76.2	82.8
Southern Asia	44.8	55.6	59.1	66.2	16.9	27.9	32.2	41.2	31.3	42.2	46.1	54.1

Least Developed   31.9 46.3 51.4 60.8 13.0 23.4 27.9 37.3 22.5 34.8 39.6 490
Countries

Source: UNESCO World Education Report 1991:97

Literacy for Sub-Saharan Africa

In absolute numbers China and India have the most illiterates as a result of their very large populations.

Literacy rates are highest in Latin America, the Caribbean and East Asia, and lowest in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Arab States and Southern Asia. Improvements in the latter group appear to have been slowest in Southern Asia. Gender disparities remain striking in all regions except Latin America and the Caribbean. The literacy gap between men and women (the differences in the proportion literate) appears to have remained the same or reduced in all regions except Sub-Saharan Africa.

The absolute number of illiterates has increased significantly in Sub-Saharan Africa, the Arab States, and Southern Asia over this period, though as the graph shows, they represent a diminishing proportion of the total population.

UNESCO projections anticipate that overall literacy rates will improve from 65% to 72% in developing countries between 1990 and 2000. Southern Asia will remain with the lowest average (54%), marginally above that projected for the least developed countries (49%).

Summary: Gender and Literacy

In developing countries there are pronounced problems with ill-representation of women, and poor literacy rates, especially for women. For communication models to fit into these local conditions, they must be suited to the audience (accessible to illiterates) and also help to change and improve these gender and

education issues. Therefore, a community-focused media, which involves all local people and provides opportunities for improvement, will bring development and equalities forward.

Content and Programmes

The following are examples, mainly in the developed world, of how local content programming is created and controlled.

Promoting Awareness through Development Films

The Television Trust for the Environment (TVE) (http://info.tve.org/network.html) is an independent production and distribution non-profit company, established by Central Television (now Carlton TV) in 1984, to specialise in environment, development, health and human rights issues. All its films for broadcast are made on a strictly editorially-independent basis.

TVE uses broadcast television and other audio-visual resources - including the internet and radio - as its key platforms. It works above all to promote informed debate, public awareness of new policies and practical solutions to the growing challenges of human development in the twenty-first century.

TVE's skill is to take the seemingly complex issues on the global development agenda and turn them into television programmes that will attract audiences worldwide: to take issues like child development, primary health, poverty or desertification, and translate them into mainstream TV programmes - drama, 'soaps' and children's programmes, as well as documentaries - that focus on the human stories involved in sustainable human development.

Creating Local Programmes in the USA

The Alliance for Community Media (http://www.alliancecm.org/) provides the telephone numbers of many centers throughout the country (USA). By using their staff to film and produce programmes, volunteers produce more than 20,000 hours of new local programming each week.

The funding for media access comes from your town or county which receives "franchise fees" from cable television operators and other commercial telecommunications businesses. The payments are compensation for the use of public property.

The decision for providing your community with media access rests with your local government's contract with your local cable company.

Media documenting indigenous experiences in their own voices

Reel Voices (http://www.reelvoices.org/about.htm) is a non-profit organisation in Philadelphia that creates, and in collaboration with other organizations, supports the creation of media documenting indigenous experiences, unfiltered and in their own voices.

Public education in developing countries through radio: Assessing the Audience

The award-winning media consultancy Radio for Development (RfD) (http://www.rfd.org.uk/middle.html) specialises in the design and implementation of public education campaigns in the developing world. Since its inception in 1995, RfD has worked in over 20 countries across the developing world.

The audience is the principal stakeholder in your campaign. We believe that by understanding the unique perceptions and interpretations of your audience we can develop meaningful and relevant messages. RfD uses innovative approaches in assessing the needs of the audience. For example, we have used the methodologies of participatory theatre and rural focus groups in our radio programmes in new and exciting ways.
All materials are pre-tested with the audience before broadcasting, ensuring that your message is focused and that the content and language of your programme is appropriate.

Worldwide material transmitted to community TV stations (USA)

Deep Dish TV (http://deepdish.igc.org/aboutus/index.html or http://www.deepdishtv.org/) is a national (USA) satellite network, linking access producers and programmers, independent video makers, activists, and people who support the idea and reality of a progressive television network.

We assemble material from producers around the world and transmit it to community television stations and home dish owners nationwide. Where commercial networks present a homogenous and one-dimensional view of society, Deep Dish thrives on diversity. Instead of television that encourages passivity, Deep Dish distributes creative programming that educates and activates.

Systematic exchange of programmes for Community TV in Australia

http://members.ozemail.com.au/~catman/ice/ gives information about programmes made by community video workers which are available for exchange between organisations and individuals.

Community TV and video exists on all continents and nearly every country in the world. As technology has become more accessible to the general population there has been a dramatic increase in the amount of local documentation of attitudes, opinions and views. Over the past decade international organisations have slowly developed to bring together community video makers to increase co-operation and information dissemination.

As part of that development there has been a need for a systematic approach to exchanging programmes made. This is the first attempt at setting up an international programme exchange system.

TV Viewing and Impacts in India

According to research by the International Development Research Centre (http://www.idrc.ca/books/reports/13indiat.html), in just over 5 years, television for the Indian viewer has transformed itself from a single-channeled, largely

indigenous, state-controlled network to a system offering multiple options and unprecedented access to a deluge of domestic and foreign programming.

The TV set has come to acquire an unprecedented priority that puts ownership of a TV over education, safe water, decent food and other basics of life.

Migrant labourers at a construction site in Delhi told us that they could not afford to own a TV set, but it had become the norm to regularly watch up to 10 hours per week of TV and videos.

At the other end of the spectrum, some children from affluent families can watch TV in their own bedrooms. But since they can also swim in their private pool, or take music and dance lessons, our survey showed that children from upper class backgrounds watched TV the least, whereas children from middle-class homes watched the most.

A significant finding of the research is the sudden displacement of less affluent viewers who no longer identify with the imagery, people, scenarios, language, dress, and lifestyles of characters on television.

Language and Content Development

The Agencia Informativa Pulsar project in Ecuador (http://www.rdg.ac.uk/AcaDepts/ea/AERDD/Csds.htm), with the objective of providing Latin American news service and local language content over the Internet in audio, provides an audio service in the predominantly oral language of Quechua and news pertaining to the cultural diversity of the region.

Local content policy; Broadcaster responses to the KPMG survey

The Report for National Association of Broadcasters showed that the high levels of compliance to, as well as exceeding of, the local content quotas are indicative of broadcasters support for local content programming.

Summary: Local Content

There are many organisations creating films with local content, to stimulate awareness, education, development, etc. There are also systems set up by where these programmes can be sent to many other community TV stations to be broadcast. The standards set for commercial broadcasters concerning local content seem to be met; however, as shown by the example in India, acquiring the television itself can prevent development, especially if the channels watched are commercial.

Therefore, for successful improvement in development, community TV stations are best served to broadcast local-content programmes, either by producing them themselves or by a programme exchange system.   The content must be relevant and reflect the local identity. As shown by Radio for Development, this can be done through drama groups, etc.