How Africa's first Gender Desk succeeded (and lessons for future initiatives)

The story of a groundbreaking global south-global north collaboration between
The Nation Media Group and The Fuller Project

Authored by:

Luba Kassova

Richard Addy

AKAS

Audiences Understood.
People Empowered.

September 2022

Table of Contents

Introduction and executive summary

Introduction and context

This is the story of the birth and initial three years in the life of the first Gender Desk in Africa, launched in 2019 by the Nation Media Group – the biggest news provider in Kenya – in partnership with The Fuller Project for international reporting on women. The three-year initiative was funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Our independent consultancy, AKAS, was commissioned by The Fuller Project to evaluate the impact the Gender Desk has had among audiences, influencers, and decision makers. As experts in impact strategy and gender representation in media, we were also tasked to assess the effectiveness of the partnership between the Nation Media Group and The Fuller Project with a view of locking in the learnings to inform best journalistic practice. That perspective provides the focus of this white paper.

As we embarked on the journey of assessing the Gender Desk's impact, we became particularly sensitive to certain important pieces of contextual information that emerged in the data gathering phase. The first related to editorial independence and potential conflicts of interest with regard to the Gates Foundation. Since AKAS works with the Gates Foundation and The Fuller Project, we were especially mindful of maintaining editorial independence in assessing the work of each news provider. To ensure accuracy, objectivity, and robust findings, AKAS used 17 different research methods and sought to triangulate all findings with as many sources as possible. We have also been transparent about the challenges that the partnership has faced and have generated recommendations for how to overcome these.

Secondly, we have provided our assessment of the Gender Desk and the partnership against a challenging cultural backdrop of prevalent strong and evidently hardening[1] male-favoring social norms in Kenya. Recent international multi-country research into social norms argues that "*beliefs about gender diversity create a self-fulfilling cycle. Countries and industries that view gender diversity as important capture benefits from it. Those that don't, don't.*"[2] These research findings have made the Gender Desk and partnership's successes recorded in this paper all the more impressive and noteworthy. They have also increased our appreciation of the courage that the Nation Media Group's editorial and leadership teams have shown in sharing openly the challenges that NMG has been facing on their groundbreaking journey.

Finally, and no less importantly, we have been alive to a potential power imbalance triggered by paternalistic dynamics between north and south partners. This issue was highlighted by the philanthropic organizations interviewed for the project and we have assessed the partnership with this challenge in mind.

---

[1] Afrobarometer, 2020
[2] Turban et al., 2019

Report structure

This white paper is structured in four parts.

In the first part we have set out the cultural and news media context in Kenya which has influenced the scope and objectives of the initiative. We also describe the news production, consumption, and impact value chain framework that AKAS used to capture all insights across the seven parts of the news value chain: organizational resources, newsgathering, outputs, news consumption, individual impacts, influencer impacts, and decision maker impacts. Many of the benchmarks established in our 2020 *The Missing Perspectives of Women in News* and *The Missing Perspectives of Women in COVID-19 News* reports were used to measure the success of various elements of the Gender Desk work.

The second part of the paper focuses on the successes of the partnership and the Gender Desk, as well as the factors that led to them.

The third part describes the key challenges that the partnership and the Gender Desk faced in these early years.

The fourth part outlines recommendations for the future, which any journalistic organization could implement when entering into a south-north journalistic partnership and/or setting up a gender news beat in Africa/globally.

Below is a summary of the successes, challenges and recommendations outlined in this paper.

What has made this "pioneering" and "promising" partnership a success?

Launching the Gender Desk has been a trailblazing success not only for elevating the voices of women in news coverage in Kenya/East Africa, but also for both partner organizations, who have learned a lot from one another in the process. First and foremost, the factors that made the Gender Desk and the partnership a success were the alignment in values of the organizations involved, and the complementarity of the skills they brought to the table. NMG and TFP shared the belief that women's perspectives should be elevated in the news in Kenya. The partners were able to bring together local and global expertise, gender reporting knowledge, and access to both big audiences in Kenya/East Africa and big international news publishing partners. The latter was partly facilitated by the Gates Foundation.

The perspectives of women have been amplified through the Gender Desk stories in every element of the news value chain. Half of the reporters telling stories about women are female. AKAS' portrayal analysis indicated that 94% of the experts, 78% of the protagonists and 67% of spokespeople interviewed for Gender Desk stories were women. Moreover, these stories have been more likely to break the stereotypes of women being portrayed in news primarily as victims, with 71% of the female news story protagonists being portrayed as empowered. All these figures compare very favorably with the benchmarks for Kenya which were reported in *The Missing Perspectives of Women in Ne*ws and *in COVID-19 News*. We found that Gender Desk stories often use angles that support women-centric policymaking through, for example, structural inequalities, human-interest and solidarity frames. Audience consumption of Gender Desk stories grew significantly in the last quarter of the analyzed period between April 2019 and June 2021. Furthermore, there is indication that the gender profile of readers has become more balanced, having previously been slanted towards men.

The Gender Desk stories have succeeded in reaching an influential global audience and some have had notable successes in spurring accountability for and changes in policies at local and national level, to the benefit of women in Kenya. The stories born out of the partnership have led to the enhancement of the lives of thousands of women: some have been sheltered, others protected from unsafe abortions, or given loans to make an independent living. All this and much more has been a direct result of the joint high-quality journalism produced. This impact has been partly enabled by the somewhat unexpected cross-publishing strategy that has emerged, expanding the outreach of the coverage to global audiences.

What are the key challenges that the partnership faced?

Pioneering work is painful because it is dependent on breaking through barriers. The pro-male cultural bias in the newsroom/among audiences is hard to dismantle and much more time, resilience, ongoing effort, courage, and diplomacy are required for it to be broken down or at least circumvented.

Too many objectives were pursued by the various stakeholders as part of the partnership. At times this has led to insufficient shared focus and overstretching of resources. Separately, it has become clear that the unpredictable obstacles resulting from a new partnership require dedicated management and mentoring attention on the ground, a resource that was often lacking for the local and embedded news reporters. The time-consuming nature of investigative and enterprise journalism has meant that co-producing stories while also feeding articles into a daily news cycle has been too much of a strain for the journalists. Additionally, creating a sustained change in elevating the empowered voices of women in news requires the systematic measurement of women's share of voice in the content produced. Currently, none of the partnering organizations has set this up.

The audience-facing challenges cluster around the high volume of Gender Desk stories which can translate into low consumption per story. In addition, it is important to calibrate the gender narrative against the existing gender norms. If the narrative is perceived as "too feminist" there is a risk of alienating the core audience and losing revenues, which is a worry that editors have to weigh up when publishing women-centric stories in Kenya.

Key recommendations for the future

AKAS generated 16 recommendations based on the abundant evidence analyzed for this project. If adopted, these would increase the impact of any journalistic partnership. The recommendations can be summarized as:
- Sharpening the partnership objectives to five or six and measuring pre-agreed success metrics from the start
- Providing ongoing gender sensitivity and cross-cultural training for journalists and editors
- Prioritizing face-to-face collaboration in planning and co-reporting
- Assigning a senior mentor to embedded reporters and a senior manager to troubleshoot issues that arise
- Amending recruitment criteria to prioritize e.g., a collaborative rather than competitive approach
- Strategically producing fewer but bigger stories
- Ringfencing dedicated partnership time to reduce daily pressures and allow time for investigative reporting
- Cross-publishing stories locally and globally
- Using more local protagonists in featured articles
- Measuring story consumption by gender to build the business case for a Gender Desk

- Building in trial and error time, along with an audience feedback loop
- Tracking the gender performance of Gender Desk stories compared to other beats
- Measuring the impact of the work along all the seven elements of the news value chain
- Assigning an impact lead to track generated impacts
- Ensuring sustainability of partnerships by focusing on the key drivers of success
- Ensuring sustainability of partnership by eliminating key barriers to investment as identified by philanthropic partners

Main Report

"I learned that we are able to be the light to others. And we are able to help society, through our stories, through our writing, to see gender as a development aspect, or as a very crucial part of our development as a country, and as a world. This collaboration, all this engagement is helping society, it is helping people."

Moraa Obiria, Reporter, Nation Media Group

TFP reporter Louise Donovan and NMG reporter Moraa Obiria speak with waste pickers at a site in Nairobi, Kenya for a story about the health effects of toxic trash on women.
(Credit: Brian Otieno for TFP)

NMG Gender Editor Dorcas Odumbe and TFP Managing Editor Claire Cozens discuss a story.
(Credit: Louise Donovan for TFP)

The context

The social and political position of women in Kenya

Women have not reached economic or political parity in Kenya, nor have they reached equality in the minds of Kenyan society. It can take decades for the positive impact of gender equality legislation - a catalyst for change - to be felt, as there is frequently a time lag between the development of gender equality laws/policies and their implementation. In this, Kenya is a case in point. In 2010, Kenya adopted a new constitution, which represented a progressive step towards gender equality.[3] The constitution stipulated that no more than two-thirds of the members of elected public bodies should be of the same gender. However, attempts to pass legislation to achieve this quota at the national level or create a path to reaching it have failed, with only 22% of members being women following the 2017 elections. While it may look like in 2022 there was a disproportionately high number of women contending political seats in the presidential and parliamentary elections, according to the Independent Electoral Boundaries Commission[4], their growth from 7% to 11% was marginal. The number of women elected increased slightly from 2017: out of the 290 single member constituencies, Kenyans elected 29 female MPs, up from 23 in 2017.[5] Academic research suggests that cultural, economic, and political factors appear to intersect to create obstacles for potential female political leaders[6], including a backlash from the entrenched male elite and society at large[7] in response to women's entry into this male-dominated space.[8] Due to patriarchal structures in Kenya, perceptions of women as inferior to men persist, and manifest in cultural practices such as child marriage and the derogation of women to domestic roles.[9] In 2019 the country was classified as a 'weak performing democracy', lagging behind many other countries partly because its progress on women's rights has been weak.[10] In 2022, the combination of drought and rising food and fuel prices due to the war in Ukraine and civil wars on Kenya's doorstep, are creating an inflammatory mix[11] that is likely to adversely affect women disproportionately more than men. The latest election campaign was reported as being "marred by violence against women" despite warnings and promises by the government to tackle the problem, according to the International Federation for Human Rights and the NGO Kenya Human Rights Commission.[12]

The representation and portrayal of women in news coverage in Kenya

The Missing Perspectives of Women in News revealed that men were quoted almost four times more frequently than women in online news in Kenya in 2019 and during the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. Women's voices were further marginalized in news about the economy and most marginalized in news about politics: while women's share of voice was almost five times smaller than

---

[3] Pair et al., 2021
[4] Akello Agola and Achieng, 2022
[5] Warigi, 2022
[6] Kivoi, 2014, National Democratic Institute, 2018, Tundi, 2104 in Pair et al., 2021
[7] Afrobarometer in Pair et al, 2021
[8] Berry, 2020, Tripp et al., 2014 in Pair et al., 2021
[9] Kivoi, 2014, Tundi, 2014, Kasomo, 2012 in Pair et al., 2021
[10] Kassova, 2020a
[11] Kiley, 2022
[12] Africanews, 2022

that of men in news about the economy, it was almost eight times smaller than men's in news about politics.

Patriarchal norms and gender stereotypes pigeonhole women as primary caregivers and homemakers across the globe, including in Kenya. This sociocultural context continues to influence the structure of newsrooms, with women being assigned to report on lower profile news beats. The *Missing Perspectives* report also found that the portrayal of women in news had not improved globally or in Kenya in decades, and that the male-dominated newsroom culture was one of the leading reasons for this being the case. It was found that achieving near gender parity in newsrooms was not enough to improve the gender balance of news outputs. In fact, news media mirrors the existing biases in society, as was corroborated by a recent Stanford University study.[13] In this study, AI natural language processing (NLP) methods, such as word embedding and sentiment analysis, quantified gender biases in the outputs of Kenya's *Daily Nation* newspaper between 1998 and 2019. The content (word embedding) analysis found that women continue to be associated with domestic terms while men continue to be associated with influence terms. The sentiment analysis revealed that women political leaders are increasingly portrayed more negatively than men political leaders. However, over time, there was some evidence of a loosening of gender inequality. According to the study's authors, concerted actions may be able to further shape and accelerate positive change.

The Nation Media Group and The Fuller Project partnership background

The Nation Media Group (NMG) is the largest and most successful media house in East and Central Africa. It operates in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and Rwanda through a chain of newspapers, two television stations and two radio stations. Its flagship print and online publication is the *Daily Nation*. It also publishes *The EastAfrican*, a weekly newspaper circulated in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, Rwanda, and Burundi. According to project manager David Aduda[14]'s concept note of August 2017[15] to promote coverage of women's issues, NMG had expressly committed itself to gender equity and equality in its editorial policy. The note highlighted that the organization stood for inclusivity, diversity of thought, public participation, and civil liberties, and as such was committed to the promotion of women's and girls' rights. Aduda observed, however, that this commitment had not been reflected in the coverage of women's and girls' issues in the Nation Media Group's various print, broadcast, and digital platforms. He also reiterated the fact that women's perspectives were missing in Kenyan news by stating that: "*Women's voices have remained muzzled in mainstream media throughout the generations because of the social, economic and political encumbrances that come into play in news coverage. Media's public watchdog role is severely constrained when views and perspectives of a segment of the population are left out…Women's issues are reported on ad hoc basis and mainly by female reporters, which is a misnomer. At any rate, the coverage of women tends to depict them as victims and not active participants in events unfolding around them. Reportage should be liberating and give hope*." According to Aduda, this portrayal bias was notable not only at NMG, but in all media houses in East Africa. NMG did not have dedicated and trained journalists who reported primarily on women's issues, nor did it have pages dedicated to women in its media properties. In this context, NMG had been keen to enter into a partnership with an established institution or agency to help it prioritize and institutionalize reportage on women's issues across all its platforms. A year previously, the Bill & Melinda Gates

---

[13] Pair et al., 2021

[14] David Aduda has been the Nation Media Group's project manager for the partnership between NMG and The Fuller Project

[15] Concept Note to promote coverage of women's issues, David Aduda, August 2017

Foundation had funded a similar project for a different beat, aiming to generate health and science coverage at NMG, and as a result introduced NMG to The Fuller Project.

The Fuller Project for international reporting (TFP) is a nonprofit newsroom which specializes in groundbreaking reporting on women, the very skills that were in deficit at NMG. The Fuller Project's leadership team was "*eager to pursue partnerships with key media organizations in Africa, to complement and expand attention on the issues that matter most*".[16] Together with NMG's leaders, TFP launched a pilot partnership that would stress-test the opportunity to increase the proportion of fair and accurate gender coverage in the *Daily Nation*. "*We all agreed that the NMG can be an extraordinary leader in this effort across Africa. The Nation is a powerful and influential vehicle through which to report on Kenyan women's rise, as well as the obstacles women face. It has the opportunity to spotlight injustice against women and girls,*" reflected The Fuller Project's CEO Xanthe Scharff, following the success of the initial pilot in 2018. She went on to argue that: "*Collaboration between Nation reporters and Western correspondents is rare, despite the Nation being a valuable resource for UK/US journalists responsible for depicting East Africa to Western readers. The Nation could generate more impact by strengthening these ties to become more of a global news source*."

Thus, the first north-south long-term journalism partnership between the Nation Media Group and The Fuller Project, funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, was born. It was officially launched in April 2019.

The partnership objectives

The gender partnering initiative was launched under the leadership of Pamella Sittoni, Executive Editor of the *Daily Nation* at the time; David Aduda, Project Manager; and Xanthe Scharff, CEO at The Fuller Project. Pamella Sittoni conceptualized the project as a monthly pull-out appended to the print newspaper that would be dedicated to reporting on issues relevant to women. It was branded *The Voice*. The objectives of the initiative also extended to the launch of a gender vertical/desk/content hub and the publication of individual daily and weekly stories across all platforms. To enable the Gender Desk's journalism, the objectives also honed in on creating a core team which would include a *Daily Nation* gender editor, sub editor and reporter as well as a reporter from The Fuller Project seconded to the *Daily Nation*'s newsroom. The Fuller Project's role was to provide strategic (editorial) advice (and collaboration) and co-reporting/training (mainly through co-reporting) so as to impart the necessary expertise in gender reporting and facilitate the successful fulfilment of all the key objectives.

The 29 project objectives agreed by the partners spanned the whole news value chain both within and outside the *Daily Nation* (see graph 1). These were mapped across the news production, consumption and impact value chain framework developed by AKAS, which brings together all the possible touchpoints where women interact with news items. This framework consists of seven elements:
1. Organizational resources, which covers the gender composition of staff, management, governance, and ownership, as well as strategic priorities
2. Newsgathering, which captures the proportion of women who appear in the news as experts, reporters, bylines, spokespeople, and sources on the ground

---

3. Outputs/news coverage, which tracks the volume of stories, the use of women protagonists and how they are portrayed in news stories (e.g., as victims, survivors, power brokers, etc.)
4. News consumption, which covers the audiences reached and their direct engagement with stories
5. Individual impacts, which captures the impacts that have resulted from an individual consuming a particular news item, such as a change in their awareness, perceptions, knowledge, sense of self-efficacy, and actions
6. Influencer impacts, which capture impacts generated by opinion formers or influencers who have engaged with stories by sharing, commenting, linking, amplifying, or commending those stories
7. Decision maker impacts, which capture the impacts generated by decision makers, such as Government ministers, parliamentarians, policy makers or any other officials in power, who have directly engaged with stories or taken action as a result of the coverage

Graph 1: A snapshot of the 29 agreed partnership objectives

Resources/ Strategy	Newsgathering/ News Production	Outputs	News Consumption	Impacts
Organizational resources: 1. NMG to hire a team of journalists to cover the Gender Desk: an editor, sub-editor, two journalists, contributors & freelancers 1a. NMG: new editor and sub-editor, and reporters 1b. TFP - Hire one full-time, Nairobi-based reporter who will partner with NMG reporters and serve as a connection between NMG and Western media outlets. [In year 2 this changes - due to the COVID reporter being evacuated to London, start doing global stories together with desk and syndicating global reporting. In Year 3 TFP provides global reporting for the Gender Desk and focuses on building sustainability and visibility of the project.] 2. Develop leadership opportunities for female reporters 3. Focus primarily on Kenya 4. TFP to provide strategic [editorial] advising [and collaboration] and co-reporting/training [mainly through co-reporting]

Strategy: 5. TFP and NMG to collaborate on: 5a. editorial strategy 5b. networking with activists and researchers, [Fuller Project contribution is through the reporting, not organizing activists or researchers] 5c. bringing additional [attention and potential] philanthropic resources to this effort 6. Develop communications materials that can serve as a model within the media industry 7. The Fuller Project Editor in Chief and Executive Director will assist the development of NMG's high level editorial [strategy development, editorial shaping of key stories, and with communication about and visibility for the project] and networking strategies | 8. Create a Gender Desk 9. With the help of consultant trainers, 200 journalists and editors will be trained in multimedia reporting across health, gender, and data journalism 10. Amplify the work of expert sources, grassroots leaders, and organizations that are currently working at all levels to advance economic equity in the gender space 11. Aim to institutionalize the use of data to tell stories on gender equality 12. Build networks with gender-based organizations to promote effective gender reporting 13. Co-report stories with [NMG gender reporters and] global publishing partners such as: The New York Times, The Washington Post, TIME, Foreign Policy, The Guardian, etc. [These are enterprise stories that require deeper dive reporting and connection to source networks]. | 14. NMG will take a multi-media approach to covering gender stories, developing print special news pages & a TV program 15. Publication: NMG will allocate dedicated pages in the Daily Nation and a segment on NTV for coverage of gender issues on a weekly basis in addition to the daily news coverage & a dedicated gender pull-out in print 16. Use data-driven journalism to feature solutions towards equality - with a specific focus on economic inclusion and the economic empowerment of low-income & marginalized women in East Africa 17. Co-publish stories with global publishing partners such as: The New York Times, The Washington Post, TIME, Foreign Policy, The Guardian, etc 18. Co-develop with NMG solutions-driven journalism that presents ideas which work. Support editorial that proposes solutions/ideas that work, within the editorial strategy 19. TFP to support engagement events such as roundtable discussions with US editors and exposure for NMG reporters | 20. Ensure thoughtful monitoring and evaluation which can help generate more business interest in NMG 21. Track audience reach using data metrics such as page views and social media engagement 22. TFP to amplify the reach of stories co-published with Nation via social media platforms and WhatsApp groups | Organizational impacts: 23. The Gender Desk work to have a transformative & sustained impact on the newsroom through creating opportunities for female reporters and editors, and through newsroom and business function staff training 24. TFP to support NMG in its goal of being the leader on the continent in news coverage on gender equality

Influencer impacts: 25. Becoming a leader in gender-sensitive news coverage 26. Becoming known as a leader on the continent for this work 27. Reporting to be tailored towards policy influencers, including policy makers, who can strategize potential solutions 28. TFP to ensure strategic outreach to an influential audience

Decision maker impacts: 29. Spur accountability for policies that affect women |

The aims and methodology of this white paper

Three years into the partnership, Luba Kassova and Richard Addy from AKAS – an international audience strategy consultancy – were commissioned to independently evaluate the success of the partnership. AKAS' work aimed firstly to evaluate the performance of the Gender Desk in NMG, supported by The Fuller Project, in terms of its business, audience, influencer, and decision maker impact. The second aim was to construct an evidence-based narrative to inform best practice of south-north partnerships. To do this, AKAS identified key performance indicators along the seven elements of the news value chain which were analyzed to assess the Gender Desk's performance.
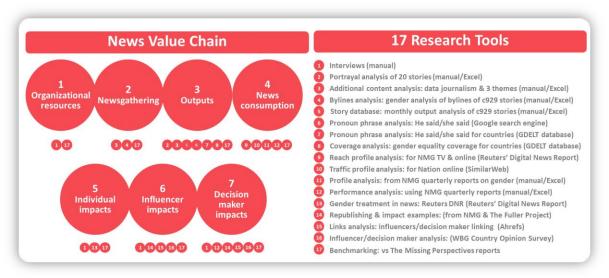
Key analyzed performance indicators

1. Organizational resources:
    - Representation of reporters who are women vs. men in the newsroom
    - Perceived prestige of working on the Gender Desk (perceived profile)
    - Benchmarking NMG against key indicators on the *Gender Parity News Checklist* (pp. 166-167 in *The Missing Perspectives of Women in News*)
2. Newsgathering
    - Gender representation of story bylines
    - Analysis of share of voice belonging to women experts or sources
3. Outputs/news coverage:
    - Stories produced by the Gender Desk
    - Analysis of share of voice belonging to women protagonists
    - Portrayal of women
4. News consumption:
    - Audience unique visitors/pageviews and engagement figures at story level broken down by sex for Gender Desk stories
    - Performance analysis of Gender Desk stories comparative to averages reported in *The Missing Perspectives* report
5. Individual impacts
    - Proportion of audiences who feel represented in the news
6. Influencer impacts:
    - Influencers following or linking to the Gender Desk's content
    - Gender Desk stories receiving industry award nominations
    - Amplification of stories in the media
    - Gender-related issue debates/reactions triggered by Gender Desk stories
7. Decision maker impacts:
    - Decision makers following or linking to the Gender Desk's content
    - Debates among decision makers, propelled by gender stories
    - Legal/policy/strategy changes resulting from gender news coverage

Research methods used

AKAS conducted a rigorous assessment of the performance of the Gender Desk. This was anchored in 17 research tools across the news value chain, as shown in graph 2.

Graph 2: 17 research tools used for this project

Luba Kassova interviewed 15 leaders and reporters in total, from the Nation Media Group (6), The Fuller Project (2), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (1) and philanthropists (6), posing 78 questions and analyzing more than 200 responses. Among the interviewees were Pamella Sittoni (Executive Editor at the *Daily Nation*), Dorcas Muga-Odumbe (Gender Editor, Nation Media Group), David Aduda (Project Manager/Head of Business Development, Nation Media Group), Nasibo Kabale (news reporter, Nation Media Group), Moraa Obiria (news reporter, Nation Media Group), Kamau Ngotho (news reporter, Nation Media Group), Xanthe Scharff (CEO, The Fuller Project), Louise Donovan (news reporter, The Fuller Project), Alex Jakana (Funder, Global Media Partnerships, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation) and others. For a full list of interviewees, please see Appendix 1.

Richard Addy was the quantitative research lead in charge of delivering analyses on content, bylines, story database, pronoun phrases, coverage, reach and traffic profile, performance and gender treatment, republishing, impact and links, and influencers/decision makers. For more information regarding each of these methods, please see Appendix 1: Methods 3 to 17.

Claire Cogan from BehaviourWise conducted the portrayal analysis, using a framework provided by AKAS in line with the framework used to produce the portrayal analysis of COVID news stories for the *Missing Perspectives of Women in COVID-19 News* report. For more information, please see Appendix 1: Method 2.

Methodology limitations

To enable AKAS to analyze the performance of the Gender Desk, the Nation Media Group provided AKAS with six quarterly performance reports and data covering the period November 2019 to June 2021. These reports set out a range of metrics including the number of stories published each month. On closer inspection AKAS noticed a significant variation in monthly stories that could not be explained purely by editorial choices. It transpired that several hundred stories were missing from the quarterly performance reports, probably as a result of the Nation Media Group carrying out a complex

change in its url structures. The consequence of this is that the study is based on 929 stories, which is a subset of all the Gender Desk stories in that period. AKAS estimated that there were approximately 500 stories missing. This means that most, but not all, stories produced by the Gender Desk were indeed analyzed and that it is likely that had the full set of stories been analyzed, a larger number of impacts would have been found.

The portrayal analysis was based on the detailed assessment of 20 stories produced by the Gender Desk in the period between November 2020 and June 2021: five were the best performing ones during the analyzed period, five were the most linked-to by external organizations; and the remaining ten were randomly selected. The benefit of conducting a portrayal analysis is that it delivers extraordinary depth in understanding the content. It is however necessarily restrictive in the number of stories that can be analyzed. Consequently, the findings from the portrayal analysis should be seen as indicative, rather than definitive, and representative of the whole set of stories. Nonetheless, some of the findings of the portrayal analysis were validated using the quantitative tools.

AKAS was not able to analyze the gender profile of individual stories because the available NMG gender profile data was only available at an all-stories level. In addition, AKAS was not able to compare the performance of the Gender Desk stories to stories from other desks because AKAS did not have access to the performance data of other *Daily Nation* beats. This results in a limited ability to understand the performance of the Gender Desk stories relative to the performance of stories produced by other desks. In addition, it is not possible to understand the additional female audience that the Gender Desk stories have brought in.

What has made the partnership a success

According to the interviews with stakeholders from the Nation Media Group, The Fuller Project, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, as well as the analysis of quantitative data, the launch of the Gender Desk has been a unique success in elevating women's voices and delivering a more gender-balanced readership of Gender Desk stories in Kenya. The partnership between NMG and TFP is seen as the "*future of journalism"*: a "*pioneering*", "*promising*", "*impactful*" and much-needed initiative, which has enriched every organization and journalist involved. The experience has been transformative not only at an organizational level, but also at an individual level, as reflected in the words of a reporter: "*I can't overemphasize the experience and the knowledge that I've gained... It has really improved or changed my perception of myself as a journalist. I didn't think I would be able to be at this particular place in my career. It has really made an impact on my career, to be very honest, but also my self-confidence has really improved*."

The somewhat unexpected cross-publishing strategy that has emerged as a model from the partnership has yielded extraordinary local and global influencer and decision maker impacts in the field of gender equality in Kenya/East Africa. Xanthe Scharff, CEO at The Fuller Project, highlighted the catalyst to this cross-publishing strategy, which has proved so successful. **"***The Gates Foundation built a large portfolio of grantee newsrooms in Sub-Saharan Africa and in Europe. They brought us together in a learning community that met before COVID. We unexpectedly found publishing and reporting partners among the
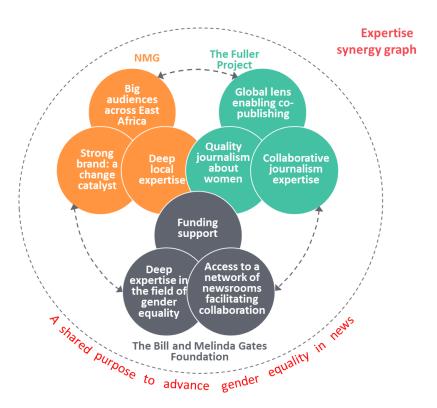
editors we met in person. Through that learning community our editors expanded the number of editorial partnerships our newsroom could bring to the NMG partnership."

There has been true synergy in the shared expertise, bringing together local and global storytelling as well as gender equality knowledge. This section is dedicated to outlining why and how the partnership has been a success.

The synergy between the two partners and the funder has been critical to the partnership's success

The interviews with the leadership team from NMG, TFP and the Gates Foundation uncovered great complementarity between the two partners supported and the funder. The significant impact that the stories born out of this partnership have had on decision influencers and decision makers in Kenya is a direct result of this complementarity in skills (see section on impact, p.20). For their part, the Nation Media Group brought deep local expertise, a strong brand which is a catalyst for change, and large audiences across East Africa (see Graph 3).

Graph 3: Expertise synergy graph: The expertise of the two partnership organizations and the funder

Source: Interviews with five leaders and Editors from NMG, TFP and the BMGF; and four reporters from NMG and TFP; conducted by AKAS between August and November 2021

The expertise that they needed but lacked was the very element that The Fuller Project was able to contribute: deep knowhow in producing women-centric journalism in a collaborative manner, and a global lens to enable the co-publishing strategy. In addition to funding the partnership, the Gates Foundation provided strategic expertise in the field of gender equality and a vision which enabled this innovative partnership. The Foundation also supported the highly successful co-publishing strategy by facilitating collaboration between newsrooms globally. In the words of David Aduda, NMG's project manager: "*What worked best was the joint story planning. Two, that collaborative approach to storytelling. And three, the ability also to use the external network to get other sources, just to build into the story, because sometimes you want to edit your story by other sources who you cannot reach, but now here we had some partners, to leverage upon to get attention or input from those other external sources.*" In another interview, a news reporter highlighted the broader lens that the partnership had promoted. "*It has given the readers, and us, a wider global view of women's experiences.*"

AKAS' assessment of whether the partners have met the objectives they had set for themselves revealed that they had indeed met or made significant progress towards meeting the majority of them: 14 of the objectives were fully or partially achieved, with clear progress made towards a further eight. However, AKAS did not find evidence for all parts of these eight objectives while six objectives or elements of objectives had not been met (this will be discussed in more detail in the challenges section). Many of the objectives that related to organizational resources (e.g. recruiting a strong editorial team, providing editorial advice and training), to newsgathering (e.g. setting up the Gender Desk, amplifying the voices of women experts and sources to advance women's economic equity, co-reporting stories), to news outputs (e.g. publishing *The Voice* print supplement, co-publishing stories with global partners), to news consumption (e.g. setting up regular audience performance monitoring), and to impacts (e.g. ensuring strategic outreach to an influential audience, producing reporting tailored to influential audiences and policy makers, coverage spurring accountability for policies that affect women) had been met.

Launching the Gender Desk has been a trailblazing success at an organizational level for NMG and TFP. The Gender Desk is challenging the existing pro-male norms in the newsroom

According to the main project stakeholder at each of the two partnering organizations, recruiting the right team for the Gender Desk was a challenge because of the skill deficit in the field of gender journalism in Kenya, as well as the stigma attached to gender-related work that exists in Kenya. However, the team that was recruited swiftly found their niche and gradually raised the profile of the beat. Dorcas Muga-Odumbe, who was recruited as the Gender Editor at the Nation Media Group, shared her sense of empowerment. "*I feel empowered, and I feel that I have the freedom to tell stories the way I want to tell them, as long as we are telling a gender story. We're allowed to tell stories from not just Kenya, we can go to Uganda. We are free to go look for the stories everywhere.*" Some progress has been made towards challenging the patriarchal norms in the NMG newsroom. A senior NMG leader shared their thoughts on the role of the Gender Desk and the sustained effort that is required to maintain progress: "*If you look at what the Gender Desk is doing, it's just doing what should already be done by any newsroom. Any news organization should be doing that. So, it is possible to sustain it once you do enough training and sensitization, so that right from the word go, if a journalist is joining a media house, they already understand the culture of that media house, they understand that this is an equal place where both men's and women's issues should be covered equally... Then it will be sustainable, but it will take a while for that to happen. It will take investment. Investment in training and investment in*

doing it. So now we've been publishing these stories in the newspapers, and on TV, but the more we publish them, the more it becomes a natural thing to do, so that it stops being the extra thing."

Unexpectedly, according to The Fuller Project's CEO, Xanthe Scharff, the partnership with the Nation Media Group has influenced and informed the strategic direction that The Fuller Project is taking for the future. As she stated: *"…The partnership informed the shaping of our mission and our understanding of how we can make the highest-level contribution to the field.*"

Newsgathering: bylines in Gender Desk stories have almost reached gender parity. The use of women experts and spokespeople in Gender Desk stories has increased dramatically

AKAS analyzed 929 stories which were produced by the Gender Desk in the period between April 2019 and June 2021. One of the elements of the analysis was to record the gender of the author of each article so as to understand the gender balance of bylines. The assessment revealed that almost half of the Gender Desk stories' bylines were women (49%) which compared favorably to the benchmark of 42% of journalists in Kenya being women.[17]

The portrayal analysis that AKAS conducted also unearthed the fact that the stories published by the Gender Desk have made significant progress in amplifying the voices of women experts. 94% of the experts who had been interviewed in the analyzed stories were women. This compared to 14% in the stories from Kenya analyzed for *The Missing Perspectives of Women in COVID-19 News* in 2020. In addition, the portrayal analysis revealed that 67% of the spokespeople interviewed in the analyzed NMG stories were women vs. zero percent in the COVID stories in 2020 for Kenya and 20% across the six countries studied.[18] The NMG news reporters themselves dwelled on the shift in mindset within the newsroom when it came to using female experts, and the role of the Gender Desk editorial leadership in achieving that. In the words of one news reporter: "*This is especially something that has improved since we had our editorial director come in, and she will say, 'I think we should speak to more women', even when we're reporting on something that happened in parliament, that will add female voices. There has been a great change since the Gender Desk was formed.*" In a similar vein, another shared their appreciation for establishing new connections with women sources: "... *now you're able to get a female source, these experts or specialists, who are happy to speak with you, and they're able to open everyone's eyes.*"

News outputs: the vast majority of protagonists and sources used in the Gender Desk's coverage have been women. They are more likely to be portrayed as empowered

A study of three East African newspapers from June 2002-2003 revealed that in the *Daily Nation*, with its highest daily circulation at that time being about 300,000 copies, articles focusing on women constituted only 5% of 3,101 articles analyzed.[19] The recent Stanford paper based on AI content and sentiment analysis between 1998 and 2019 and quoted earlier, revealed that although the distance between men and women has been closing in some gender equality metrics, in *Daily Nation* outputs women are very much still portrayed mainly in their domestic roles, rather than as experts or

---

[17] Hanitzsch, 2019
[18] India, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, the UK, and the US
[19] Omari, 2008 in Pair et al., 2021

empowered individuals.[20] In this context, the work that the Gender Desk has been producing is that much more important for its loosening of this bias among newsroom journalists and editors. The portrayal analysis of 20 stories from the Gender Desk revealed that 78% of the protagonists in the news stories were women. This compared to 31% in the 2020 COVID stories from Kenya and 23% in the COVID stories from the 6 comparator countries.[21]

Researchers have noted that media coverage of women leaders in Kenya tends to highlight their appearance and personality traits while coverage of male leaders more often highlights their stances on issues or leadership ability.[22] The portrayal analysis conducted for this case study uncovered a much more positive picture for the stories produced by the Gender Desk. 71% of the female protagonists who were at the center of the analyzed news stories were portrayed as empowered vs. 30% of the protagonists in the COVID stories analyzed in 2020.[23] A member of the NMG Gender Desk team expressed the sense of satisfaction that producing women-centric work relating to politics gave them:
 "*I'm proud because I have been able to tell women's stories in an in-depth manner. In our monthly publication, The Voice, we pick a story and we exhaust it. And every time we tell those stories I feel very proud because, for example this month, in the edition we're working on for next month, we have, for the first time, many women who are vying for what we call the governor's position... And to be in this WhatsApp group [of women candidates], where every day they tell their stories, so that I can also tell their stories, because they know that I tell their stories, that is something that makes me proud.*"

News outputs: Gender Desk stories often use angles that support women-centric policymaking

AKAS assessed the extent to which the news coverage that the Gender Desk produced was likely to ignite policymaking efforts aimed at improving women's lives. To do this, the team looked at three frames/story angles (out of 12) that had been identified in *The Missing Perspectives of Women in COVID-19 News* as foundational for encouraging policymaking that supports women. These were: the cooperation/solidarity frame, which zones in on community co-operation and generates hope; the human-interest frame, which focuses on someone's personal story; and the thematic/structural inequalities frame, which uncovers inequalities faced by particular population groups, such as single mothers, widows, disabled people, or indeed all women. The AKAS portrayal analysis showed that 30% of the 20 analyzed Gender Desk stories contained a structural inequalities frame, 35% contained a cooperation/solidarity frame and the same proportion contained a human-interest frame. The prevalence of these frames in the coverage of Gender Desk stories is impressive when compared with the use of these frames in reporting on COVID during the first wave of the pandemic in 2020. At that

---

[20] Pair et al., 2021
[21] Kassova, 2020b
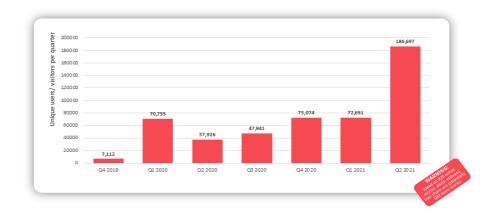[22] Devitt, 2002; Kahn, 1994; McIntosh, 2013; Bystrom, 2006 in Pair et al., 2021
[23] Kassova, 2020b

time, AKAS research showed that only 1% of the global news coverage of COVID contained the structural frame, 5% the solidarity frame and 7% the human-interest frame.

News consumption: there has been strong quarterly audience growth for Gender Desk stories. Gender Desk coverage visitors are becoming more gender-balanced

AKAS analyzed the quarterly audience performance of the 929 Gender Desk stories for seven quarters, from quarter four in 2019 (October to December) to quarter two in 2021 (April to June). The analysis of unique users/visitors of Gender Desk stories unearthed significant quarter-on-quarter audience growth between quarter one and quarter two in 2021 (see graph 4). The unique users for Gender Desk stories increased by more than two and half times from one quarter to the next. The growth in the total visitor sessions per quarter followed a similar pattern, also suggesting a strong growth in engagement. The sessions increased from 82K in quarter 1 of 2021 to 201K in quarter 2.

Graph 4: Unique Users/Visitors for Gender Desk stories (Q4 2019 to Q2 2021)

Source: AKAS analysis of NMG performance reports

Analysis of the share of unique visitors to Gender Desk stories indicated that the gender profile of readers, which is typically slanted towards men in Kenya, as in other countries globally, is balanced in this instance. In the latest quarter of the analysis, the proportion of male and female readers was on a par (see graph 5). In the same quarter a year previously, the proportion of female readers was 40% women vs. 60% men.

Graph 5: Share of unique visitors to Gender Desk stories (Quarterly, Q4 2019 to Q2 2021)

Source: Data from NMG specifically requested by AKAS

According to the independent Reuters Institute's Digital News Report, *Daily Nation*'s online profile of women also increased, albeit marginally, between 2020 and 2021, rising by 1.4 percentage points from 45.9% to 47.3%.[24]

Real world impacts

The Gender Desk and the Nation Media Group/The Fuller Project partnership have succeeded in reaching an influential global audience and have had notable successes in spurring accountability for, and change in, policies at local and national level, to the benefit of women in Kenya. As set out in the news value chain detailed earlier, AKAS assessed the real world impacts of the partnership by focusing on the influencer[25] and decision maker impacts elements.

Influencer real world impacts: The partnership has made extraordinary progress towards securing strategic outreach to an influential global audience

Overall, gender equity is not a high priority among Kenyan decision makers and influencers. In the World Bank Group's Country Opinion Survey of opinion leaders carried out in 2019, Kenyan respondents ranked "gender equity" ninth out of 23 development priorities.[26] The environment in which the Gender Desk has been trying to generate influencer impacts is therefore potentially challenging but despite this unfavorable context, the team has generated multiple influencer impacts under three categories: amplification of content; recognition and awards; and events and invitations.

---

[24] AKAS analysis of Reuters Institute's Digital News Reports 2020 and 2021
[25] Influencers are organizations or individuals that directly or indirectly influence the ultimate decision makers. They include media, NGOs, activists, academia, think tanks, consultancies, international institutions, labor unions, religious organizations, women's groups, youth groups, consumer associations, business associations, high net worth individuals, high profile campaigning celebrities and former decision makers
[26] The World Bank Group, 2019

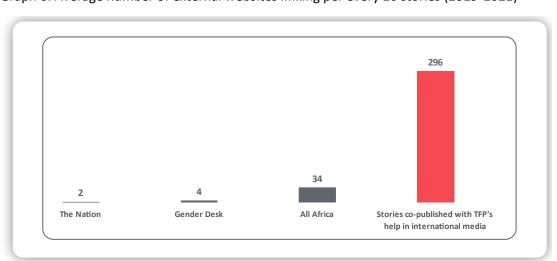**Amplification of content: Gender Desk stories have been widely amplified**

Non-media influencers: A range of international institutions, NGOs, think tanks and academics have linked to the Gender Desk's stories (for a full list see Appendix 2). Among the 420 websites linking to NMG Gender Desk content were Harvard University, UN Women, United Nations, Economic Commission for Africa, African Union, Oxfam, and ONE Campaign.

Republished and co-published stories had a dramatic effect on the reach and impact of the Gender Desk stories via international and pan-African media. This was achieved by extending the level of linking by other organizations into the Gender Desk's content.

Pan-African media influencers: The leading pan-African outlet, AllAfrica.com, republished 243 Gender Desk stories. These 243 were in turn linked to by at least 826 other websites.

International media influencers: 12 stories produced jointly by the Nation Media Group and The Fuller Project were co-published by high profile international media including The Telegraph, CNN, El Pais, The Guardian, Al Jazeera, Foreign Policy, TIME, and Premium Times (for a full list see Appendix 2). These stories went on to be linked to by at least 335 websites. The AKAS analysis shows that the stories which were cross-published by a global news provider and *Nation* have yielded extraordinary impact through high levels of linking by influencers.

Linking rate with *Nation*, co-publishers and republishers: The external website linking rate per 10 stories published provides an indication of the amplification capabilities of each media property after taking account of the number of stories produced. As set out in Graph 6, at a rate of 4, the Gender Desk's external website linking rate per 10 stories published was double that of *Nation* as a whole. For those Gender Desk stories republished by AllAfrica.com, the rate went up to 34, whilst for the stories co-published with leading international media the rate was 296. This data points firstly to the relatively strong influence that the Gender Desk has compared to *Nation* online, as well as to how well the Gender Desk and The Fuller Project's joint stories have leveraged the power of pan-African and international news media through republishing and co-publishing.

Graph 6: Average number of external websites linking per every 10 stories (2019-2021)

The Nation	Gender Desk	All Africa	Stories co-published with TFP's help in international media
2	4	34	296

Source: AKAS analysis of Ahrefs.com data

Partner impacts: In addition, AKAS also uncovered partner impacts where a "halo effect" of the partnership meant that The Fuller Project built up sources and a sense of the global issues that start locally in East Africa. This informed The Fuller Project's broader work and led to an investigative series of stories published in *Nation* and then separately in other outlets including The New York Times, The Telegraph and Marie Claire.

Recognition and rewards

Awards: In 2022, Moraa Obiria, a full-time news reporter at the Gender Desk, won an award in the print category of the inaugural excellence in journalism awards hosted by the Journalists for Human Rights-Kenya project, Voice for Women and Girls Rights for her reporting on human rights and gender issues. She was also a first runner-up at the National Gender and Equality Commission's 2021 Usawa Awards[27], that recognized equality champions.

Nominations: [The deadly consequences of curbing reproductive rights](#) , co-authored by Louise Donovan and Nasibo Kabale[28], was originally published online in late 2019 on *Nation* and The Fuller Project's website, and co-published by [The Telegraph](#). The article, which was a wide-ranging ["investigative report on how Kenya's restricted access to prenatal care, contraception and reproductive services is leaving women in increasingly desperate situations"](#) was also nominated as a finalist for the Anthony Shadid Award for Journalism Ethics in 2020.

Events and invitations: Nation Media Group has developed a reputation as a media leader in issues of gender equality because of its unique Gender Desk

The Gender Desk team's reputation has also been enhanced by invitations to participate in high profile panels or deliver speeches. Two such examples have been invitations to Moraa Obiria from the African Women Leaders Network, and the Kenya and Echo Network Africa. According to Pamella Sittoni, Executive Editor at the time, NMG has gained the reputation of being an important leader in the media's coverage of gender: "*It's widely acknowledged, and we've actually seen now many times, that the Ministry of Gender in this country sees us [Nation Media Group] as partners in its work. Our editor sits on important panels that are discussing these issues. I have been invited a number of times by the Ministry of Gender to some of the events. And I don't see my colleagues, for example, in other news houses being invited. So, in my view, I think we've been recognized as advancing the cause of gender equality in Kenya. We've won. Some of our stories have been nominated for big awards as well. And one of our writers was given an award for her work contribution towards gender equality.*"

Decision maker real world impacts: The partnership has achieved some success in spurring accountability for policies/change at a local/national level, with positive effects for women

In the same way that influencers deprioritized "gender equity", the World Bank's Country Opinion Survey also found that only 9% of government ministry respondents surveyed in Kenya ranked "gender equity" as a top three development issue from a choice of 23 issues. It is therefore notable that AKAS

---

[27] Source: National Gender and Equality Commission, 2021
[28] Louise Donovan was seconded to Nation Media Group's newsroom from The Fuller Project while Nasibo Kabale is a news reporter at Nation Media Group

found, and were told about, at least five decision maker impacts that the Gender Desk, supported by The Fuller Project, has achieved.

National and local decision maker impacts

[The deadly consequences of curbing reproductive rights](#) story, which as detailed above was nominated for a prestigious award, also generated important decision maker impacts. The Nairobi Governor was mentioned in the story and followed up with the reporters after the story had been read by his office. In addition, Esther M Passaris, the Nairobi County women's representative, also reached out to the volunteer clean-up team who were finding abandoned fetuses in the river. As a result, in early 2020, the clean-up team received $10,000 in funding through the National Government Affirmative Action Fund (NGAAF). The funds we used to rejuvenate the area, including building pathways, gardens, and a playground for children.

Seven months after the publication in June 2020 of the story "[The life and times of a widow](#)", authored by the Gender Desk journalist Moraa Obiria, the Government announced plans to establish a special fund for widows. In July 2021, the Women Enterprise Fund launched the Thamini Loan, a special loan product for widows that provided access to interest free loans.

The Ministry of Public Service and Gender acted on an August 2020 story about gender-based violence entitled ["GBV: Where do broken hearts go?",](#) authored by Moraa Obiria. In this story, *Nation* queried the lack of state investment in shelters for survivors of sexual and gender-based violence, despite the rise in numbers of such cases during the pandemic. The Ministry of Public Service and Gender responded by releasing a manual on establishing safe houses and shelters, a recognition that these facilities were indeed crucial. Furthermore, in April 2021, the Government listed the provision of safe houses and shelters as essential services.

Partnership stories have achieved impacts among international decision maker bodies

Two of the stories produced by the Gender Desk were amplified by decision-making bodies in the UK and Finland. This is a very rare occurrence and signals an endorsement of the high quality of the stories.

A report published by the UK Home Office (Ministry for Internal Affairs) titled [Country Policy and Information Note on Kenya: Female Genital Mutilation](#) referenced a Gender Desk story from June 2021, entitled [Shebesh targets circumcisers to end FGM](#) and authored by Kamau Maichuhie. This highlights the international reputation that Gender Desk stories are gaining among decision makers.

Another international decision maker, The Finnish Embassy in Nairobi, [commented](#) on the Gender Desk's article [Finland to help Kenya fight GBV](#), which referenced the Finnish ambassador. The article was co-authored by Moraa Obiria and Kamau Maichuhie, both news reporters at the Gender Desk. The article highlighted a joint gender-based violence (GBV) response program which was launching in Kenya, supported by Finland.

The key challenges that the partnership has faced

All pioneering work is painful. By definition, its success is dependent on breaking through barriers and glass ceilings. The interviews and quantitative evidence show that the pro-male cultural bias in the newsroom/among audiences in Kenya is hard to dismantle and will require more time and courage, as well as diplomacy. The pro-male bias is a particularly substantive challenge in Kenya where some pro-male beliefs have become more entrenched rather than weakened over recent decades. For example, according to Afrobarometer, between 2005 and 2017 the proportion of both women and men who "strongly agree" that men make better leaders increased.[29] The proportion of men who agree with this statement has increased at a faster rate than among women.

In the course of the multi-method research that was conducted for this project, AKAS unearthed 23 challenges spread out across the elements of the news value chain. This white paper focuses on a subset of 10 of these, which could arise in any north-south journalism partnership. In other words, the challenges that have been highlighted are not confined to any idiosyncrasies of the two partnership organizations but could be applicable more broadly to the wider journalistic community. Challenges that arose as a result of the pandemic have been excluded from this paper because they were evaluated as temporal.

Organizational challenges

The interviews unearthed three key challenges related to organizational resources: the large number of partnership goals, the pro-male culture, and the insufficient managerial support on the ground.

1. **Too many objectives can lead to a lack of sufficient focus and overstretching**

During the interviews with partners from the different organizations, AKAS asked each interviewee which objectives they thought were the most important for the partners to pursue. With 29 objectives in total, the responses to this question revealed that there was no strong alignment around a small number of objectives, but rather a long tail of objectives that different stakeholders prioritized as most important. The strongest alignment was around the goal to collaborate in sharing story ideas, which was mentioned by four out of the nine people who were asked that question. In researching this partnership, AKAS found that six of the 29 objectives had not been met. With hindsight, most of these objectives, for example those relating to delivering solutions journalism, engagement events, or social media story amplification campaigns, were assessed as a stretch too far for the team working on the partnership.

2. **Persistent cultural barriers mean that change is slow**

"*A senior editor said angrily that women's issues aren't a thing and that there's not enough emphasis on men*," a news reporter recalled, describing a conversation with a senior leader who pushed back somewhat aggressively on the need for more women-centric stories. The interviews with stakeholders from the Nation Media Group revealed a split in views about whether the newsroom culture was changing. Some views were cautiously optimistic while others were more pessimistic. *"Firstly, we've created diversity of content. Secondly, existing content has been enriched through gender balanced*

---

[29] Afrobarometer, 2020

reportage. Third, the training that has been done has moved us in terms of capacity building for journalists. So that, even if people still have some baggage, at least people are sensitized. They are aware about gender issues. The fourth point is that we've seen gender beginning to take center stage in our news planning processes. That's a very, very good move for us....At least, we can now talk about 40% to 50% who practice gender sensitive reporting." This was one of the more optimistic views we heard from the newsroom. Another stakeholder appealed for more training, especially at an editor level, to circumvent or break down the entrenched stereotypical views and allow for a new, more gender-sensitive way of reporting. **"*We need to sensitize editors and let them know that gender is not just about the Gender Desk, but it's also about when you get the stories in your own desks, you're able to make them gender-responsive or gender-sensitive. But, because not all editors understand gender-responsive reporting, it becomes a little bit difficult to get the gender-sensitive stories...Sometimes you can do the story, and they will tell you to re-angle the story in a different way emphasizing a stereotype. So we are yet to break that masculine way of handling the stories, but we have a virtue in that we have a Gender Editor who sits in those meetings every day that will come to understand slowly by slowly. I could say for now, we're somewhere at 2%, 3%. It's a slow process*."**

A senior leader highlighted an additional cultural challenge related to the broader audience of the Nation Media Group, who, as shown earlier in the paper, are more likely to exhibit a strong pro-male bias: the importance of finding the right editorial balance in delivering gender-sensitive content so that there is no audience backlash. **"***We are supposed to serve everybody. This is not a women's organization, it's a national publication. And we have to show that we are not favoring any one side, so it's about when people start thinking you're not being balanced in terms of gender, because you seem to be reaching out more to women, being more favorable for women. And yet, this is really the right thing to do if you're to level the playing field. And in terms of why we have not achieved 50/50, I think you look at the realities of the fact that this is a business. So it's a private company, with shareholders, and you have to return a profit. And there are just some things that you have to be realistic about. You have to put out a publication that will sell. And so, if you put out a certain story, and the next day the report is that that kind of story did not do so well for us, so, you almost have to look at where the market is and to balance out. So I guess at some point we will achieve that 50/50, but it has to be gradual. It's not something that you can do suddenly…***"**

3. Insufficient management support for the partnership puts pressure on reporters

The unpredictable obstacles resulting from a new partnership require dedicated management and mentoring attention on the ground. This was often lacking for the reporters. Some of the stakeholders interviewed for this project suggested that it was important to dedicate an editorial support specifically to the stories pursued as part of the partnership. In the words of a news reporter: *"You need someone on the ground to iron out all of this stuff because things came up constantly about costs; which reporting trip came out of whose budget; who owned which picture rights etc. All these tiny, tiny things that needed to be ironed out…. and they're very time consuming. You ideally need an Editor on the ground to oversee all of those day-to-day issues."* In addition, there were challenges, sometimes connected to the multi-cultural team that worked on stories, which would have benefited from a senior mentor to support the journalists working on joint storytelling: **"***I would say that I know I'm capable of a hell of a lot more than I ever thought before I went over, because it was very challenging. There were a lot of things that were chucked in my direction. Whether that's logistical, cultural, or journalism. Lots of different things on all engines. But really, it was kind of amazing...***"**

Newsgathering challenges

4. Working on investigative/enterprise journalism while feeding into the daily news cycle is tough

The time-consuming nature of investigative and enterprise journalism means that working on these kinds of stories while also feeding stories into a daily news cycle is too much of a strain for journalists. "*The Nation is a newsroom that wants daily news and daily turnaround stories and those things [producing daily news & investigative journalism] do not match up. You can't be turning around investigative stories in two days or a day,*" affirmed one stakeholder, voicing their reservations around the workload. This was echoed by another: "*… here I am, working, and assigned to a particular desk, so I have to deliver content every day and I also have to keep up with the project, so there's a bit of disconnect here and there.*"

Challenges related to news coverage

5. The lack of systematic measuring of women's share of voice slows down change

Experts who work on improving women's representation in newsrooms and in news coverage often argue that organizations can only change the things that they measure. Otherwise, what is not measured remains a bias that goes unnoticed and is therefore hard to change. While AKAS measured the proportion of protagonists, experts, and spokespeople who are women for this case study, this is not something that the partners have set out to do on a regular basis. This lack of systematic measurement of women's share of voice can lead to certain gaps in coverage. For example, the portrayal analysis that AKAS conducted revealed that among the analyzed articles which zoned in on women's issues, 45% did not include a first-person perspective from a protagonist who had been affected by the issue identified in the story article.

6. Reconciling global and local story angles to ensure cross-publishing relevance is a challenge

Some stakeholders interviewed for this project pointed out that it was difficult to reconcile global and local angles, with the connection between them not always being obvious. While virtually all stakeholders expressed their appreciation of the power of collaborative story planning and writing, some highlighted the need for longer planning cycles in view of the complexity created by trying to merge global and local lenses.

Challenges related to news consumption

7. There is limited understanding of the differing (audience) needs of women and men

The data analysis and interviews which AKAS conducted for this project revealed that the editorial decisions between the partners on what stories are relevant to women were over-reliant on anecdotal evidence and under-reliant on robust data. The most frequently-used sources include anecdotal feedback about previous stories, analysis of online audience comments from the previous day, and talking to ordinary people, none of which are reliable enough. Conversely, the least frequently-used sources were those which are the most robust and most reliable indicators of the needs of larger groups of women. These include market research survey findings, story performances broken down by gender/sex, a gender profile of the desk vs. all other news desks, and analysis of stories from beyond the Gender Desk which contain gender story angles.
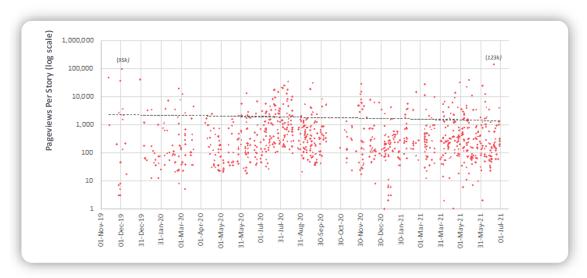
8. Balancing the gender narrative with an audience that favors the needs and perspectives of men is challenging. Getting it wrong could impact the bottom line.

As mentioned in challenge two, some stakeholders from NMG thought that there was a danger in pushing out news coverage that departs too far from the cultural norms currently embraced by Kenyan society. This could result in the Nation Media Group being perceived as too feminist, which in turn could lead to audience members abandoning their consumption of NMG properties and NMG losing revenue. One Kenyan stakeholder interviewed for this project labelled the organization as being held "a patriarchal hostage by readers" through this active audience criticism of stories being too women-centric.

9. A high volume of stories generates low consumption per story

AKAS' analysis of pageviews generated by each of the 929 analyzed Gender Desk stories (see graph 7) showed that most of the stories had less than 1000 pageviews, pointing towards the volume of stories preventing any individual one from cutting through to punch above its weight. This insight, coupled with that of overstretched Gender Desk reporters who juggle their daily duties with working on investigative or enterprise stories, leads to the conclusion that covering fewer, bigger stories in more depth may be an attractive alternative strategic path to try.

Graph 7: Pageviews by published story

Source: AKAS analysis of NMG performance reports based on 929 Gender Desk stories, Nov 2019 to Jun 2021

Challenges related to impacts

10. Individual impacts are hard to generate due to the entrenched pro-male bias in society

Earlier in this paper we established that news coverage can generate impacts on three different levels: at the level of individuals, influencers, and/or decision makers. Expecting change at an individual level may be too high a bar for any partnership to set itself as a goal due to the strong male-favoring norms prevalent in Kenyan society which have been mentioned in earlier sections. Changing individual attitudes and societal norms is a long-term goal and needs to be reached through the concerted efforts of multiple institutional actors.

Key recommendations for the future

AKAS generated a number of recommendations, the implementation of which would underpin any impactful south-north journalistic partnership. They are based on the evidence derived from the analysis of all the material AKAS examined in connection with the Nation Media Group and The Fuller Project partnership. The recommendations have been grouped along the different elements of the value chain.

Related to resources and strategy

1. Sharpen the partnership objectives to five or six key issues and agree success metrics at the start. This will ensure that everyone driving and involved in the partnership will work efficiently towards the same goals.

2. Provide ongoing gender sensitivity and cross-cultural training for journalists and editors. Sensitizing teams to gender-transformative reporting is critical in the context of a strong patriarchal culture. One-off training would not move the dial.

3. Prioritize face-to-face collaboration wherever possible. This helps with developing trust, planning complex stories and the cross-pollination of ideas.

4. Assign a senior mentor locally to support the welfare of the embedded reporters and a senior editor/manager to troubleshoot solutions to unforeseen challenges.

5. When recruiting journalists/editors to work on south-north partnerships, ensure that they have the following seven key skills which were highlighted as important during the interviews with stakeholders:
   - Collaborative rather than competitive approach
   - Cultural awareness and sensitivity
   - Management experience
   - Regional (East African), as well as global experience
   - Passion for gender equity and writing
   - Discipline to stick to partnership goals
   - Courage and patience to chase the story scoops

Related to newsgathering/news coverage

6. Consider strategically producing fewer articles to allow for more investigative pieces to cut through. Produce fewer, bigger stories.

7. Ringfence dedicated partnership time to reduce the daily pressure on local reporters and make space for investigative and enterprise reporting.

8. Following the impressive impact generated by cross-publishing stories locally and in international news outlets, cross-publish stories locally and in global outlets for greater impact.

9. Use more local protagonists talking about their lived experiences.

Related to news consumption

10. Critically, start measuring story consumption broken down by gender to understand the different needs of audiences and to be able to build a business case examining whether the Gender Desk is bringing more women to the outlet.

11. Build some trial and error time into partnership collaborations and processes. Create a feedback learning loop with audiences.

12. Track the gender performance of the Gender Desk stories vs. those of other beats to understand whether new audiences are consuming the content and to build the business case.

Related to impacts

13. Demonstrate the real world impact, and ensure the systematic recording of individual, influencer, and decision maker impacts for sustainable growth. Focus goals on generating influencer and decision maker impacts.

14. Assign an impact lead to track the generated impacts as journalists are often too busy to do this systematically themselves. This person would generate enormous return on investment as funders look for evidence of real world impact before funding initiatives.

Securing sustainable partnerships that funders would support

According to the philanthropists who were interviewed for this project, there are key drivers and barriers for impactful south-north partnerships. These should be focused on to maximize success.

15. The main drivers are: clarity of purpose and synergy in values between partners; linking purpose with specific goals; agreeing metrics for measuring impact before the partnership starts; strong local presence and expertise; global exposure; inter-thematic reporting, and multi-platform approach.

16. The key barrier to investment in partnerships is first and foremost lack of evidence of impact. Other barriers include limited funder budgets which prioritize programmatic instead of media investments; lack of expertise on the ground; and a paternalistic dynamic between the north and south partner leading to an imbalance in power.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Research tools used in this project

Method 1: Interviews

Luba Kassova of AKAS conducted in-depth interviews with 15 stakeholders or philanthropists for this project. Their responses were analyzed and coded in order to understand quantitatively how widely shared each of the views expressed was among the group.

AKAS interviews with leaders and reporters from NMG, TFP, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation & leaders of philanthropic organizations

Conducted between 24th August and 2nd November 2021

Method 2: Portrayal analysis

A framework designed by AKAS was used to analyze how women were portrayed in 20 stories produced by the Gender Desk. The same framework was used to produce the portrayal analysis in COVID news stories for *The Missing Perspectives of Women in COVID-19 News*, thus enabling benchmarking analysis. Claire Cogan from BehaviourWise recorded the proportion of protagonists, sources, spokespeople, and experts who were women. Included in the analysis was an evaluation of whether the female protagonists in the stories were portrayed as victims, survivors, or empowered individuals.

Method 3: Additional content analysis: data journalism and three themes (manual/Excel)

Additional analysis was carried out concurrently with the portrayal analysis to quantify how many, if any, data points were used to tell each story, how many charts were used, and whether the story referenced women's economic inclusion, economic empowerment, or economic equality/equity with men. The analysis also quantified whether the stories featured a first-person account by a story protagonist.

Method 4: Bylines analysis: gender analysis of the bylines of 929 stories (manual/Excel)

AKAS reviewed all the bylines in NMG's quarterly performance reports to assess the proportion that were women and then compared this with the proportion of women journalists in Kenya identified in the Worlds of Journalism report of 2019.

Method 5: Story database: monthly output analysis of 929 stories (manual/Excel)

AKAS created a story database that merged all the information from NMG's quarterly performance reports with Ahrefs linking data (see Method 15), and the byline analysis (see Method 4) for all the tracked stories to assess their impact with influencers.

Method 6. Pronoun phrase analysis: he said/she said (Google search engine)

AKAS used the Google search engine to assess the number of times the phrases "she said" and "he said" appeared on *Nation* online urls (nation.co.ke; nation.africa/kenya; and nation.africa/kenya/gender) between January 2015 and August 2021. The percentage of "she said" mentions out of all "he said" and "she said" mentions was then calculated to produce a pronoun analysis indicator trend for women's share of voice in *Nation*'s online properties.

Method 7. Pronoun phrase analysis: he said/she said for countries (GDELT database)

AKAS used the GDELT Project global online news archive to assess the number of times "she said" and "he said" appeared in articles in Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, and across the continent of Africa between January 2017 and March 2021. The percentage of "she said" mentions out of all "he said" and "she said" mentions was then calculated for each country on a daily basis to produce a pronoun analysis indicator trend for women's share of voice for the three countries and the African continent.

Method 8. Coverage analysis: gender equality coverage for countries (GDELT database)

AKAS used the GDELT Project global online news archive to research the level of gender equity coverage in English and non-English online news media in Kenya between January 2017 and September 2021. Gender equity coverage was defined as articles which include any of the following terms: "gender equality" or "gender inequality" or "gender bias" or "gender balance" or "gender gap" or "gender equity" or "feminism" or "feminist" or "women's rights" or "women's issues" or "women's concerns" or "sexist" or "sexism". This coverage was then calculated as a proportion of all articles within the geographic and time parameters.

Method 9. Reach profile analysis: for NMG TV & online (Reuters' Digital News Report)

The 2020 and 2021 Reuters Institute Digital News Reports were analyzed to compare the change in proportion of women in the *Nation*'s weekly reach on TV and online in Kenya.

Method 10. Traffic profile analysis: for *Nation* online (SimilarWeb)

Using the SimilarWeb website analytics platform, AKAS analyzed the men/women split of traffic to *Nation* online for the period September 2020 to August 2021.

Method 11. Profile analysis: from NMG quarterly reports on gender (manual/Excel)

Using NMG's quarterly reports for April 2019 to September 2021, AKAS identified men's vs. women's share of unique visitors and pageviews for Gender Desk stories.

Method 12. Performance analysis: using NMG quarterly reports (manual/Excel)

Using NMG's quarterly reports from Q4 2019 to Q2 2021, a range of monthly and quarterly story-based performance assessments were carried out for key metrics including: published stories per month, page views per story, unique users per quarter, and sessions per quarter.

Method 13. Gender treatment in news: Reuters' Digital News Reports

The 2021 Reuters Institute Digital News Report contains a key attitudinal question: "*Thinking about the news in general in your country, do you think that news organizations cover each of the following fairly or unfairly?*" The answers for "*people from your gender*" was analyzed to produce the rating for men and women.

Method 14. Republishing and impact examples: (from NMG and The Fuller Project)

Narrative examples of stories that were republished or co-published (especially by high profile media, influencers, and decision maker organizations) were developed. In addition, five stand-out decision makers impacts were profiled. These were identified via the interviews, Ahrefs (see Method 15) and web searches.

Method 15. Links analysis: Influencer/decision maker linking (Ahrefs)

The search engine optimization software Ahrefs was used to understand which organizational websites from different influencer and decision maker categories were linking to the Gender Desk stories, either directly on the Nation Media Group's web platforms, or through republished and co-published stories.

Method 16: Influencer/decision maker analysis: (WBG Country Opinion Survey)

The World Bank Group's Country Opinion Survey in 2019 assessed the opinions of influencers and decision makers in Kenya on a range of questions. For this case study, questions in which respondents were asked to identify the most important development priorities were analyzed to understand how "gender equity" rated compared to the 22 other choices.

Method 17: Benchmarking vs *The Missing Perspectives* reports

The Missing Perspectives of Women in News/COVID-19 News reports, written in 2020, provide benchmarks on a range of the metrics in the news value chain for Kenya, for six countries (Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, India, the UK, and the US), and at a global level. This case study was able to compare the Gender Desk's performance against these benchmarks.

Appendix 2: A full list of news media, international organizations, think tanks, NGOs and academic institutions which have amplified the Gender Desk stories

Influential news media which has linked to or co -/republished the Gender Desk's stories

Media amplification examples

The Telegraph	EL PAÍS	FP	CNN	allAfrica
https://www.telegraph.co.uk	http://elpais.com	https://foreignpolicy.com	edition.cnn.com	http://allafrica.com/
THE Sun	ALJAZEERA	the guardian	BUSINESS DAILY	Premium Times
http://thesun.co.uk/	www.aljazeera.com	www.theguardian.com	http://businessdailyafrica.com	www.premiumtimesng.com
thebmj	TIME	BUSINESS TODAY	Ms. MAGAZINE	
www.bmj.com	https://time.com	http://businesstoday.co.ke	http://msmagazine.com	

Source: AKAS analysis of Ahrefs.com data

International institutions, NGOs, thinktanks and academics which have linked to the Nation Media Group's Gender Desk's stories

Influencer impact examples

Harvard University www.harvard.edu	Social Science Research Council www.ssrc.org	United Nations Women www.unwomen.org	Equality Now www.equalitynow.org	OSCE www.osce.org/odihr
University of Nairobi www.uonbi.ac.ke	The Borgen Project www.borgenproject.org	International Food Policy Research Institute www.ifpri.org	Rona Foundation www.ronafoundation.co.ke	ReliefWeb www.reliefweb.int
ONE Campaign www.one.org	African Union www.africa-union.org	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa www.uneca.org	World Humanitarian Forum www.whf.london	Oxfam www.oxfam.org
Oxford Policy Management www.opml.co.uk	FAWCO www.fawco.org	World Justice Project www.worldjusticeproject.org		

Source: AKAS analysis of Ahrefs.com data

Appendix 3: AKAS biographies

AKAS is an award-winning international audience strategy consultancy that delivers impact, audience, corporate, narrative and communication strategies to a wide range of purpose-led organizations. Founded in 2012 and based in London, AKAS has worked with over 50 clients including The Guardian, BBC News, BBC World Service, The World Bank, IMF, OECD, European Investment Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Asian Development Bank, International Energy Agency, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Open Society Foundations, Thomson Foundation, Luminate, Adessium, Children's Investment Fund Foundation, Wellcome, George Lucas Foundation, Participant Media and Warner Bros. AKAS recently won the Media Research Group's award for best international research and a Gold Anthem Award for purpose and mission-driven work.

Luba Kassova is the main author of this report and of the 2020 reports *The Missing Perspectives of Women in News* and *…in COVID-19 News*. A director and co-founder of AKAS, in 2019 Luba redirected her energies to focus more on non-fiction writing. Her evidence-based storytelling, which balances insights gained from rigorous data analysis with a recognition of the human aspect in stories and a compassionate response to them, swiftly garnered attention and awards. To date, Luba's reports and articles have been published or quoted in more than 400 news outlets across 75 countries worldwide. Throughout a prior 20-year career that spanned media, telecommunications and nonprofit organizations, Luba's work revealed her perennial interest in analyzing differences in various audiences internationally, including key gender differences in their media and news consumption. She has also previously provided consultancy for news providers on developing their audience strategies. Luba holds an MA in Sociology from Sofia University, Bulgaria and an MA in Contemporary European Studies from Sussex University in the UK. She has also completed Behavioral Science modules at Warwick University and the London School of Economics (LSE).

Richard Addy is the report's primary lead for the design and analysis of quantitative research. He is also the author of the impacts-focused section of this report. A director and co-founder of AKAS, Richard has nearly 30 years' experience as a strategist and has advised CEOs, organizational leaders, and previously government ministers in his role as a government economist. Prior to setting up AKAS, Richard was the chief adviser on strategic and audience issues to the BBC's Deputy Director General who was responsible for BBC News locally, nationally and internationally. He is a board member of theguardian.org and a board advisor and co-chair of the Race Equity Committee at Mind, the UK's leading mental health charity. Richard has a BSc in Economics from Warwick University and an MSc in Economics from Birkbeck College, University of London.

Claire Cogan who conducted the portrayal analysis, is an applied behavioral scientist and researcher. She is founder of BehaviourWise, a behavioral science and insight consultancy. She holds an Executive MSc in Behavioral Science from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) and a BA in International Marketing, Spanish and French from Dublin City University (DCU). She is a registered member of the Global Association of Applied Behavioural Scientists (GAABS). Prior to establishing BehaviourWise, Claire enjoyed a successful and varied 25-year career in the corporate sector. She headed insight and category marketing teams and led organizational behavior change programmes in various countries for Unilever, Britvic and Kerry Group. She also worked for leading global market research agencies. Throughout her career Claire has specialized in uncovering insights into human behavior and identifying ways to influence it.

Judy Nagle has provided proofreading and copy editing services for the report. With a focus on clarity, concision, and correctness, while still retaining an author's distinctive voice, Judy has built up extensive experience of language editing on a wide range of subjects since becoming a freelance proofreader in 2015. Her client base includes academics at universities in Italy, Switzerland, and Spain as well as UK commercial clients. Judy holds an MA in Modern Languages from Cambridge University and a Diploma in Strategic Management from Birkbeck College, University of London.

References:

Africanews. (2022). Kenyan women make historic breakthrough in August elections. Africanews website. August 16, 2022. Retrieved from: https://www.africanews.com/2022/08/16/kenyan-women-make-historic-breakthrough-in-august-elections//

Afrobarometer (2020). The Online Data Analysis Tool. Accra: AFROBAROMETER

Akello Agola, E. and Achieng, G. (2022). *Kenya Election 2022: 'I woke up to threats of being gang-raped'.* BBC News, August 2, 2022. Retrieved from: https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-africa-62398217

Bystrom, D. (2006). *Advertising, web sites, and media coverage: Gender and communication along the campaign trail.* In: Carroll SJ, Fox RL, editors. Gender and elections: Shaping the future of American politics. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; pp. 169-188.

Devitt, J. (2002). *Framing Gender on the Campaign Trail: Female Gubernatorial Candidates and the Press.* J&MC Quarterly. 79(2): 445-463. doi: 10.1177/107769900207900212

Hanitzsch, T., Hanusch, F., Ramaprasad, J., & de Beer, A. S. (Eds.). (2019). Worlds of journalism: Journalistic cultures around the globe. Columbia University Press.

Kahn, K.F. (1994). *The distorted mirror: Press coverage of women candidates for statewide office.* Journal of Politics. 56: 154–173. doi: 10.2307/2132350

Kasomo, D. (2012). *Factors Affecting Women Participation in Electoral Politics in Africa.* International Journal of Psychology and Behavioral Sciences. 2012; 2(3): 57-63. doi: 10.5923/j.ijpbs.20120203.01

Kassova, L. (2020a). *The Missing Perspectives of Women in News.* International Women's Media Foundation. Retrieved from: https://www.iwmf.org/missing-perspectives/

Kassova, L. (2020b). *The Missing Perspectives of Women in COVID-19 News. .* International Women's Media Foundation. Retrieved from: https://www.iwmf.org/women-in-covid19-news/

Kiley, C. (2022). This East African nation is known for stability. But drought and rising prices are fueling insecurity. CNN, August 2, 2022. Retrieved from: https://www.cnn.com/2022/08/02/africa/kenya-drought-insecurity-intl-cmd/index.html

Kivoi, D.L. (2014) *Factors Impeding Political Participation and Representation of Women in Kenya.* Humanities and Social Sciences. 2: 173-181. doi: 10.11648/j.hss.20140206.15 30

McIntosh, H. (2013). *Women and Politics in the Media (review of the three books Political culture and media genre: Beyond the news, Women political leaders and the media and Woman president: Confronting postfeminist political culture).* Global Media Journal - Canadian Edition. 6(2): 99-104.

National and Gender Equality Commission (NGEC). (2021). *NGEC Ten Years Anniversary Report. The First Decade of the National and Gender Equality Commission 2011-2021.* Retrieved from: https://www.ngeckenya.org/news/8258/80-equality-champions-feted-at-usawa-awards-

National Democratic Institute, Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA) Kenya. (2018). A Gender Analysis of the 2017 Kenya General Elections. National Democratic Institute. 2018 Feb

[Cited 2020 February 15]. Available from: https://www.ndi.org/sites/default/files/Gender%20Analysis%20of%202017%20GeneralE lections%20FINAL%20High%20Res%20for%20Printer%20- %20NEW%20COVER_small.pdf

Omari, B.P. (2008). *Portrayal of Women in Kenya's Print Media: a Study of Daily Nation, the Standard, and Kenya Times, June 2002 to June 2003.* Master's thesis, Andrews University. 2008. Available from: https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/theses/20/

Pair, E., Vicas, N., Weber, A., Meausoone, V., Zou, J., Njuguna, A., and Darmstadt, G. L. (2021). *Quantification of gender bias and sentiment towards political leaders over 20 years of Kenyan news using natural language processing.* Front Psychol. 2021 Dec 10;12:712646. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2021.712646. PMID: 34955949; PMCID: PMC8703202.

Reuters Institute. (2021). Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2021. Retrieved from: https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021- 06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf

The World Bank Group. Public Opinion Research Group. (2019). *FY 2019 Kenya Country Opinion Survey Report.* Retrieved from: https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/32735/FY2019-Kenya-Country-Opinion-Survey-Report.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Tundi, T.E. (2014). *Factors influencing women participation in political leadership- the case of kimilili constituency of bungoma county, Kenya.* Global Advanced Research Journal of Geography and Regional Planning. 3(1): 001-031. Available from: http://garj.org/garjgrp/index.htm

Turban, S., Wu, D., and Zhang, L.T. (2019). Research: When Gender Diversity Makes Firms More Productive. Harvard Business Review. February 11, 2019. Retrieved from: https://hbr.org/2019/02/research-when-gender-diversity-makes-firms-more-productive

Warigi, G. (2022). *Women make major strides with a record number of elected leaders.* Nation website. August 28, 2022. Retrieved from: https://nation.africa/kenya/blogs-opinion/opinion/women-make-major-strides-with-a-record-number-of-elected-leaders-3928358