



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

## IPDC THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION

CI-16/COUNCIL-30/8

### Concept note The power of gender-transformative media development projects

Gender Equality is one of UNESCO's two global priorities, with a commitment to promote equality between women and men across the Organization's mandate. It is recognized both as an important end in itself and as an essential means for the achievement of sustainable development in all its dimensions.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by world leaders in September 2015, includes among its 17 goals a stand-alone goal on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (SDG 5) as well as gender-sensitive targets in other goals.

The Global Media Monitoring Project 2015, supported by UNESCO, shows that change is needed in all dimensions of news media content and practice in order to reach gender parity in the media. Among the report's key findings:

- Women make up only 24% of the persons heard, read about or seen in newspapers, television and radio news;
- Only 37% of reporting is carried out by women;
- Only 4% of stories clearly challenge gender stereotypes (a one percentage change since 2005);
- Women are more than twice as likely as men to be portrayed as victims.

UNESCO sees gender awareness as comprising between one and three components:

- *gender-sensitive* approach (i.e. a project that registers basic gender differentials);
- *gender-responsive* approach (i.e. goes further and sees how the differentials are significant, in how the project is designed);
- *gender-transformative* approach (i.e. a gender-specific project in that it aims to change gender inequalities);

Applications for funding from IPDC are required to comply with basic gender-awareness criteria. IPDC's project submission guidelines state that IPDC "does not normally support projects, which do not demonstrate gender-sensitivity as regards the ultimate beneficiaries (for instance, which fail to disaggregate numbers of men and women beneficiaries)". IPDC also has guidelines that explicitly request information on gender aspects across most of the fields of the project proposal (including project justification, target group, project outputs and activities). There is also a requirement for gender-disaggregated information on project beneficiaries to be included in each of the project proposals submitted to the IPDC. IPDC recognizes the importance of promoting gender equality at all stages of the project cycle – in its design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

In addition, the IPDC's intergovernmental Council has endorsed UNESCO's work on the development of Gender-Sensitive Indicators for Media (GSIM) and IPDC has supported numerous projects involving the application of the GSIM to gauge gender sensitivity in media operations and content.

However, despite IPDC's stated commitment to gender equality, an internal survey<sup>1</sup> carried out by the Programme's Secretariat on 80 project proposals approved by the IPDC Bureau in 2014 to examine their gender-awareness compliance showed that gender equality concerns were not sufficiently taken into account in a majority of project proposals. It concluded that gender mainstreaming needed to be done in a more systematic and rigorous manner in project proposals and throughout the project cycle.

The report did however observe a "continued rise in the number of gender-specific projects (14 percent of the projects in 2014)", which it viewed as reflecting a clear effort to encourage gender-dimensions in media development. This trend continued in 2015, with 21 percent of gender-specific projects among the 71 projects approved at the last Bureau meeting.

Based on the above, the IPDC Bureau at its 60<sup>th</sup> meeting had a discussion on this issue and requested that a thematic debate be organized during the meeting of the IPDC Council. The objective of the present Thematic Debate will therefore be to:

- Clearly distinguish between gender-sensitive and gender-transformative media development projects;
- Provide examples of successful IPDC gender-transformative projects;
- Reflect on possible ways to place more emphasis on gender-transformative projects and to position gender equality and women's empowerment at the center of IPDC's media development agenda.

### Speakers

Ms Fatemah Farag, WAN IFRA Women in News Programme

Ms Annette Young, Journalist & Presenter, Host of The 51 Percent, France 24 Television

Ms Misako Ito, UNESCO Advisor for Communication and Information in Bangkok Office

Mr Elvis Michel Kenmoe, UNESCO CI Advisor in Gabon Office

Moderated by Ms Albana Shala, Chair of IPDC.

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<sup>1</sup> Research was conducted by Lisa Soderlindh, a secondee to IPDC from the Swedish Immigration Board.