Gender equality and media regulation study

Rwanda
This study has been compiled by PAX PRESS, a Rwandan NGO focused on capacity building of journalists, with support from the Rwanda Media Programme 2021-2026 - Capacity Building and Professionalisation of the Media. The Rwanda Media Programme is implemented by Fojo Media Institute, Swedish Radio Media Development Office (SR MDO), PAX PRESS and Rwanda Broadcasting Agency (RBA). It is funded by the Swedish Embassy in Rwanda and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation.

Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this report are solely those of the authors. They do not claim to reflect the opinions or views of Fojo Media Institute, or any of the research study's funding partners.
Preamble

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for the Advancement of women (BPfA) adopted at the Fourth UN World Conference on Women (1995) called on governments and other actors to “increase the participation and access of women to expression and decision making in and through the media and new technologies of communication”, (Strategic objective J.1.) and “promote a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media” (Strategic objective J.2.). Similar to provisions in other policy instruments prior to and following the BPfA’s adoption, area J intimated at possible tensions between guaranteeing (women’s) freedom of expression on the one hand and media independence on the other hand. Media freedom and gender equality in freedom of expression are not mutually exclusive. Both are necessary for democracy and protected in international standards. Only in a society where there is a plurality of voices that participate in an accessible and dynamic public sphere is there room for the development and improvement of democracy.

This study initiated by Fojo Media Institute in collaboration with Gothenburg University’s Department of Journalism, Media & Communication (JMG) and other partners is one in a set of country case studies conducted to understand how gender equality and women’s freedom of expression are integrated in media regulation, self-regulation and within media inhouse policies. The case studies were implemented in countries in which Fojo is active, namely Armenia, Bangladesh, Rwanda, Somalia, Sweden and Zimbabwe. The case studies accompany a broader global study of gender in media law and policy at international, regional and country levels spanning more than 100 nations.

Key findings in the global study include the following:

- Transnational policies with gender and media provisions tend to remain at the level of generalities, focusing commonly on gender-based discrimination, gender stereotypes, the role of stereotypes in socialisation of children, and violence against women.
- There are inconsistencies between commitment to gender equality in national policies, and to gender equality in media policies and legislation. Widespread interest in general gender equality at national levels does not appear to filter into State media regulation to the same extent.
- In the five in ten national media policies with provisions related to gender equality sampled, it is the right to non-discrimination on the basis of a list of identities, including sex or gender that is protected, making this the single most common issue at which State regulators draw the line on media freedom.
- In industry self- and co-regulation, the few instruments with gender-related provisions address a handful of issues, including non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, and most prevalent, treatment of sexual assault survivors. Some provide for content monitoring and mandate the respective authorities to investigate complaints, however the extent to which complaints mechanisms function as intended, is limited.
- Only a fraction of media organisations have in place gender equality, equal opportunities or gender diversity policies.

The global study considers the scope and obligations derived from the protection of gender equality and freedom of expression as human rights by international and regional systems. It assesses how such supranational principles inspire national legal systems regulating media, underlining that:

- The role of freedom of expression within the context of democratic societies would deem certain provisions aimed at restricting or limiting the dissemination of opinions and ideas contrary to the notion and principles of gender equality excessive and
disproportionate, and therefore unacceptable within the context of a free, open and pluralistic public sphere.

- An alternative method to promote gender equality in media would be to establish proper and efficient self or co-regulatory mechanisms, which can also be promoted through appropriate media policies and legislation.
- Effective promotion of gender justice needs to be connected to the adoption of specific policies rather than to the mere enforcement of legal and regulatory provisions.
- It is important for civil society and academia to pay particular attention and increase research and advocacy regarding gender equality on social media. It would also be necessary to promote and/or regulate increased transparency of platforms with regards to the impact of their content moderation policies on gender justice.
- Where legal restrictions are not acceptable, alternative positive policy measures to address possible societal risks could be applied. These include Establishment of reinforcement of codes of ethics for journalists, specifically covering gender treatment issues; promoting media pluralism and reinforcing the role and mission of public service media; training of journalists and media professionals on freedom of expression and the right to equality and non-discrimination.

The global study offers a set of recommendations and a pathway to catalyse the effectiveness of policy and legislation in addressing gender equality issues and enabling women’s freedom of expression in and through the media.

The present report of the findings from Rwanda reveals that while the country is a global leader on gender equality characterised by remarkable political will, a rigorous gender regulatory framework and a pro-gender equality national Constitution, the same cannot be said of the media sector. Media policy is silent on gender equality as are the Media and Access to Information laws of 2013 and the Media Code of Ethics. It is at the media organisational level that gender issues are considered through internal policies, strategies and rules in some outlets. Gender inequalities prevail in media content and the number of women journalists and media house leaders is still very low compared to that of men. Regulatory measures to prevent gender-based violence are missing. Change is necessary to build an inclusive media sector.

Ultimately, the global research and the detailed country studies seek to guide media development bodies and other stakeholders in their work to promote gender equality in and through the media with full respect for other human rights involved, particularly the right to freedom of expression and freedom of information.
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Acronyms

BPfA - Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for the Advancement of women
CSO - civil society organisation
FFRP - Rwanda Women Parliamentary Forum
GBV - gender-based violence
GMO - Gender Monitoring Office
ICT - information communication technology
LAF - Legal Aid Forum
SR MDO - Swedish Radio Media Development Office
MIGPROF - Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MINALOC - Ministry of Local Government
MINIJUST - Ministry of Justice
NGO - non-governmental organisation
NWC - National Women’s council
OGS - Office of the Government Spokesperson
PWD - persons with disabilities
RBA - Rwanda Broadcasting Authority
RGB - Rwanda Governance Board
RMC - Rwanda Media Commission
ROJAPED - Rwanda Organisation of Journalists Advocating for People with Disability
RURA - Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority
1. Introduction

“Gender equality in every sector is not a favour, it is a right. It is the way it should be. The right to equality is not something that can be given or taken.”

- H.E. Paul Kagame

The quote from the president highlights that gender equality is a must in every sector of activity in Rwanda, both in laws and in practice. Rwanda is renown as a pioneer and a role model for its dedication to champion for gender equality. The progress made on gender equality and women’s empowerment are enormous. In fact, Rwanda is one of the global leaders in gender equality (LAF:2021) 1. In 2017, the World Economic Forum ranked Rwanda as the fourth best country in closing gender gaps, behind only Iceland, Finland, and Norway.

For the last two decades, strong political commitment in Rwanda has resulted in significant positive strides in the promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment. In fact, women’s representation in decision-making positions makes Rwanda the world leader in terms of women in parliament (62% after the 2018 parliamentary elections). Rwanda’s political will to promote gender equality is also visible through its commitment to at least 13 regional and international conventions and protocols on gender equality. In addition, gender compliance under Rwandan law has scored very high in so far as various laws are concerned, at least on paper. This includes gender and socio-economic and political rights covering various sectors such as education, participation in decision making, labour, reproductive health, GBV (Gender Based Violence) prevention through various regal and regulatory frame works including the constitution, penal code, GBV law, succession law, land, and property law, etc. (The Legal Aid Forum/LAF, Idem). In brief, as stated by the constitution, gender is expected to be observed across the sector and this is normally materialised by sector-specific laws.

Throughout the newly published research by The Legal Aid Forum (LAF) on Comprehensive Gender compliance under Rwandan law,2 one of the key findings is that gender equality has been catered for throughout a majority of sector-specific laws: equality in labour matters, equality in family, inheritance and land matters, equality in decision-making, education and health sectors, economic empowerment, etc. However, the alarming remark is that the policy and media specific laws have remained silent as far as gender is concerned. Contributing to the preparation of a new National Media Policy, PAX PRESS has prepared and submitted a policy brief to media stakeholders’ institutions (MINALOC, RGB and others) pointing at the lack of inclusiveness throughout media policy and laws. The policy brief also calls for speeding up the preparation of the new National Media Policy that is expected to inspire new or revised media laws.3 Among other things, PAX PRESS highlighted in the policy review the lack of catering for promotion of gender equality and inclusion of PWDs (persons with disabilities) and other minority groups.

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1 The Legal Aid Forum, Gender Compliance under Rwandan Law, Fast-Tracking Gender under Rwandan Laws, Kigali, 2021
2 Ibid
3 PAX PRESS Policy, Brief on Review of Media regulatory framework, 2021
While gender is catered for in a range of sectors in Rwanda through established policies and laws, as a media actor and building on our aim of promoting gender throughout the sector, the priority is to examine the status of gender compliance in the media sector through assessing both the regulatory framework and its implementation.

The overall objective is to understand how gender equality is integrated into media regulation and self-regulation (law and policy), by mapping cases from Rwanda. The specific objectives are:

- To analyse gender compliance throughout regulatory frameworks;
- To identify gender gaps in media policy and laws;
- To document good practices in gender equality and media regulations; and
- To propose actionable recommendations for increased gender compliance in media laws and in media outlets.

2. Methodology

This assessment is mainly qualitative and limits itself on documentary review. Thus, data and information have been collected through the internet, libraries, archives, and organisational reports. A desk review of the regulatory framework of the Rwandan media sector, including laws and policies and existing reports and publications on gender matters in relation to media regulation has been conducted. The analysis includes important legal documents regulating media sector in Rwanda such as the Media Policy in Rwanda, Access to Information Law, and Law Regulating Media in Rwanda of 2013 as well as various media houses’ gender policies.

In addition, the government websites (Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion, MIGEPROF, Gender Monitoring Office (GMO), etc.) have been of paramount importance for this research in order to identify and assess the content of policy and strategic documents on Gender Equality such as the National Gender Policy, National Strategy on Gender Equality, etc.). Equally, the analysis of the reports and publications from various institutions both public and private including research and documentation has been done.

For the purpose of this assessment, all the information at hand have been thematically organised and analysed in regard to its key and specific sections as provided through the guideline. Thus, the research report has been elaborated by members of PAX PRESS from various backgrounds and disciplines.
3. Findings

3.1. The state

Table 1. Central authorities regulating gender equality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authorities in charge (ministry, agency etc.)</th>
<th>Authorities responsible for regulating media on gender equality issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rwanda Parliament</td>
<td>• Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Justice</td>
<td>• Gender Monitoring Office (GMO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF)</td>
<td>• Office of the President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Ombudsman Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• National Commission for Human Rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rwanda Media Commission</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Gender in media regulatory framework is under parliament, MINIJUST and MIGEPROF. The implementation of gender policy is done through a gender machinery system. The machinery composed of MIGEPROF, GMO, National Women Council/NWC, Forum of Women Parliament/FFRP that, among other roles, enhance its capacity in ensuring that gender policy options are effectively implemented:

The Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion fulfils its mandate through the Directorate of Gender Promotion and Women Empowerment and the Directorate of Family Promotion and Child Right Protection. The Single Unit helps the Ministry to implement and coordinate various programmes and projects run by the Ministry and its affiliated agencies. The Gender Monitoring Office monitors gender mainstreaming and GBV service delivery in all sectors by all stakeholders.

The Office of the President gives broader guidelines and national commitment to apply and promote gender mainstreaming. RURA and RMC co-regulate media industry, they share responsibilities and practically intervene in cases of gender issues. These bodies have the power to close or sanction any media house which commits abuses towards the public including giving voice to the gender oppressors. RURA deals with registration and technical regulation of broadcast media houses while RMC deals with registration of print and online media, issues Press Cards, and promotes professionalism and journalistic ethics through self-regulation.

3.1.1. Legislation

There is an absence of gender sensitivity in media legislation. The current media law has no gender related provisions. There is a need to consider gender aspects. The media often use general provisions given by the constitution or the code of deontology and ethics - a
set of principles that journalists pledge to follow and respect scrupulously, to be and stay professional to their career\(^4\), and other laws to address gender issues.

Article 16 of the constitution of Rwanda stipulates that “all Rwandans are born and remain equal in rights and freedoms. Discrimination of any kind or its propaganda based on, inter alia, ethnic origin, family or ancestry, clan, skin colour or race, sex, region, economic categories, religion or faith, opinion, fortune, cultural differences, language, economic status, physical or mental disability or any other form of discrimination are prohibited and punishable by law.”\(^5\)

In article 38, the constitution of Rwanda also stipulates that “Freedom of press, of expression and of access to information are recognised and guaranteed by the State. Freedom of expression and freedom of access to information shall not prejudice public order, good morals, the protection of the youth and children, the right of every citizen to honour and dignity and protection of personal and family privacy. Conditions for exercising and respect for these freedoms are determined by law.”\(^6\)

In the media law N°02/2013 OF 08/02/2013 regulating media there is no article concerning the promotion of gender equality in the media\(^7\). But in the code of deontology and ethics, article 8 talks about the protection of minors and victims of rape: “A journalist shall show sensitivity and exercise caution while handling information relating to rape victims and minors less of than 18 years of age. He/she shall be careful not to identify the names of victims of rape whether minors or otherwise, take care not to publish their pictures and photos or details likely to lead to their identification, except if this serves the child’s interests. He/she should equally avoid identifying victims of rape unless the latter agree, are of age and received explanations on possible consequences of such information.”\(^8\)

Table 2. Gender equality-related requirements in the national legislation on public service media

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Document title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article 8: Members of the Board of Directors the Board of Directors of RBA shall be the supreme governing organ of RBA. It shall comprise seven (7) members with skills, knowledge, and integrity. At least thirty percent (30%) of the members of the Board of Directors shall be females.</td>
<td>Law n°42/2013 of 16/06/2013 Establishing Rwanda Broad-casting agency and determining its mission, organisation, and functioning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^4\) https://accountablejournalism.org/ethics-codes/Rwanda-Charter
\(^6\) ibid.
\(^8\) https://accountablejournalism.org/ethics-codes/rwandan-high-media-council-code-of-ethics
The law establishing RBA requires that 30% of the board members must be female. However, the law remains silent concerning gender equality among staff and in editorial content.

### 3.1.2. Policies for the promotion of gender equality in the media

**Table 3. National guidelines etc. created by government or government agencies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document title (policy, guideline, strategy, plan)</th>
<th>Issued by (name agency, body)</th>
<th>Area of concern (see table 5 below)</th>
<th>Comment / observations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A. By the State</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Policy in Rwanda</td>
<td>Government of Rwanda/ MINALOC</td>
<td>Media regulation</td>
<td>There is no provision relating to gender in media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revised National Gender Policy</td>
<td>Government of Rwanda</td>
<td>Women representation in decision-making positions in media</td>
<td>This revised National gender Policy talks about ensuring that the constitutional minimum quota of at least 30% of women representation in decision making and leadership positions is enforced in private sector, CSOs and media.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B. By industry bodies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code of Ethics (also called Code of Deontology and Ethics)</td>
<td>Rwanda Media Commission (RMC)</td>
<td>Self-regulation of journalists in Rwanda</td>
<td>No articles related to Gender in media in the latest code of Ethics guiding journalists in Rwanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Ethical Guidelines for Internet Content Publishers</td>
<td>Rwanda Media Commission (RMC)</td>
<td>Public Guidance while using the internet media platform to share content.</td>
<td>No provision relating to Gender equality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Media policy in Rwanda does not specifically provide for any specific dimension of gender equality (such as gender stereotypes), however it does neither discriminate on gender ground. Compliance to gender refers to the broad government guidelines.

3.1.3. Gender equality indicators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Document title</th>
<th>Indicator Type</th>
<th>Indicator (cut &amp; paste from document)</th>
<th>Comment/observation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rwanda Media Barometer 2019</td>
<td>Words and figures</td>
<td>“Despite the existence of a legal framework conducive for freedom of expression and citizen awareness and actual exercise of their right, citizen perception on the respect of freedom of expression stands at 70.1% for men and women are slightly more satisfied than men as indicated in the figure below”</td>
<td>This indicator is about how to exercise freedom of expression by gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Words and figures</td>
<td>“33.8% of media practitioners experienced self-censorship in the past two years. In terms of gender disaggregation, the experience of self-censorship is almost on par among male and female journalists.”</td>
<td>This indicator is about the way journalists exercise self-censorship by gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Words and figures</td>
<td>“The variable of promotion of gender scored 72.8%. While the low percentage of accredited female journalists (24.26%) affected the total score of the variable, citizen perception on the role of media programmes in the promotion of gender equality scored 95.7%”</td>
<td>This indicator is about Media as a platform for Strengthening gender equality through content and representation, under the main topic of Good Governance and democracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment of gender status in Rwanda media by Media High Council</td>
<td>Words and figures</td>
<td>“From the academic year 2014-2015 to 2018-2019 a total of 389 students have graduated (120 females and 269 males) from the school of journalism and communication of the University of Rwanda. It is obvious that the female graduates are fewer compared to male graduates.”</td>
<td>Assessment of gender status in Rwanda Media was conducted by Media High Council, a public institution which was in charge of capacity building of journalists</td>
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<td>---</td>
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<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender Assessment in Media sector by Fojo 2021</td>
<td>Words and figures</td>
<td>“Gender imbalances are present in journalism education institutions and media houses, including in the newsrooms. Only 4 (i.e. 19%) of the 21 teaching staff at journalist schools surveyed are female. Out of 1611 accredited journalists in Rwanda, 30% are women. In the three journalism schools surveyed, female students accounted for 33% of the students”</td>
<td>Gender Assessment in Media sector has been done by Fojo Media Institute in 2021, to assess the status of gender in Rwandan media.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are many surveys, assessments and other tools developed to know the status of gender equality in Rwanda, and in media specifically. It includes Rwanda Media Barometer which is conducted every two years by Rwanda Governance Board and partners, Assessment of Gender Status which used to be conducted by Media High Council (it is no longer there), and other non-consistent surveys which all show how bad the status of gender equality in media is.

All these documents are available via internet to the general public, and they can be used by any individual, institution or body.
3.2. Media regulatory authorities

Table 5. National media regulatory authorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regulator</th>
<th>Mandate (issues regulated)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rwanda Media Commission⁹</td>
<td>Self-regulatory Body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Local Government</td>
<td>Media Legal Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rwanda Governance Board</td>
<td>Media coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority</td>
<td>Broadcast media regulation and registration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rwanda Media Commission has been established in the Media Reform of 2013, as a mechanism of giving the power to the journalists to regulate themselves. It is the one in charge of code of ethics and its application. It can act in favour of the journalists or the public in case of any conflict relating to issues of professionalism, content, and conduct.

Unfortunately, there is no provision on gender in media included in the current media code of ethics.

Besides, Ministry of Local Government and Rwanda Governance Board are the direct public institutions in charge of Media in Rwanda, specifically in the field of regulation, capacity building and coordination.

Rwanda Utilities Regulatory Authority is in charge of registering and regulating broadcast media namely television and radio stations, as well as online media.

3.3. Self-regulatory bodies

Table 6. Self-regulatory bodies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-regulatory bodies (in the country)</th>
<th>Self-regulatory bodies (in the region or sub-region)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rwanda Media Commission</td>
<td>Media regulators institutions in Economic Community of central African states Region</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rwanda Media Commission (RMC) is the media self-regulatory body instructed by Law No. 02/2013 of 08/02/2013 Regulating Media more specifically in its article 2 (para 20) and established by all Rwandan journalists in their General Assembly of 27/8/2013. The

⁹ RMC is a hybrid body, a self-regulatory body instructed by law.
self-regulatory body is mandated to protect journalists, regulate their conduct and the daily functioning of media and advocate for media freedom in Rwanda.

Article 4 of the same law specifies that the daily functioning of media and the conduct of journalists shall be regulated by the media self-regulatory body. However, says the article, the national utilities statutory regulator (RURA) shall also carry out the regulation of audio, audio-visual media and internet. From this, both the RMC and RURA are involved in regulating audio, audio-visual media, and the internet. In this regard, the RMC appears to focus on the daily functioning of the media vis-à-vis content issues, while RURA is responsible for overall regulatory issues.

As a notice, media regulation is not well streamlined. Although The Media Policy recommends self-regulation as regulatory framework for the media, the fact remains that Rwanda is still under a co-regulation mechanism of the media as for example RURA are doing some content regulation works besides the media self-regulatory body. The Office of Government Spokesperson (OGS) also has some roles. The OGS oversees and coordinates the effective communication of the Government of Rwanda's story to audiences at home and abroad. In partnership with government institutions, OGS sets and implements best practice using modern communications tools.10

Table 7. Self-regulatory measures on gender equality11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type (Governance, staffing, handling complaints)</th>
<th>Provisions, comment on past experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender policies</td>
<td>According to the Managing Director of The Bridge Magazine (a local online news website) when an institution has a gender policy accessible to all staff, it avoids a big number of gender issues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-harassment strategies</td>
<td>When anti-harassment strategies are there and hanged on the walls in all offices, it helps the staff to not commit gender-based errors and crimes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistent inhouse meeting/workshops on gender equality and equity</td>
<td>Periodical meetings and workshops on gender equality within the institution raises awareness and skills on this topic, and therefore the number of gender issues is avoided and sorted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complaint’s mechanisms</td>
<td>Gender suggestion box, gender desk, gender focal points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

10 https://www.jobinrwanda.com/index.php/node/5443
11 Most of the comments in this section are based on the observations and experience of the PAX PRESS/Rwanda Media Programme team.
RMC does not have a particular complaint mechanism for gender issues. However, it does not discriminate on gender grounds when it comes to receiving complaints related to the code of conduct.

RMC examines complaints to determine the appropriate resolution or sanction under this procedure for handling cases.

The system is designed to maintain standards in the media by enforcing the terms of the code and thereby holding journalists/editors/media practitioners/broadcasters to account, while still preserving appropriate freedom of expression and freedom of the media. This is primarily achieved by the RMC administering an efficient and free complaints service. The RMC encourages complainants, as the more people use the system, the more the media are held to account for their decisions. This will lead to a rise in standards in the media in Rwanda.

As a fundamental principle, the RMC aims to resolve complaints and reach an agreeable resolution between the parties, through mediation before moving to a full adjudication process and a formal decision.12

3.4. Media organisations

Table 8. Gender equality measures in news media organisations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Media organisation</th>
<th>Type of measure</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The New Times Rwanda</td>
<td>Anti-harassment strategy</td>
<td>It is forbidden for staff and managers to sexually harass their work-mates and subordinates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bridge magazine</td>
<td>Gender policy</td>
<td>It was created with support from Pax Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ubumwe.com</td>
<td>Anti-harassment policy</td>
<td>It was created with support from Pax Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jobcenter.rw</td>
<td>Gender policy</td>
<td>Jobcenter Management developed gender policy which is used to employ staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life Radio</td>
<td>Gender policy</td>
<td>It was developed with support from Pax Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Umucyo Radio</td>
<td>Gender policy</td>
<td>It was developed with support from Pax Press</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some media houses have built on the national gender regulatory framework and developed their own gender policies, strategies, and regulations. This has been very helpful for gender promotion and sexual harassment prevention.

Besides, some of these institutional gender regulations give directives concerning how to include gender in content and they are based on how to develop gender-sensitive newsroom guidelines.

### Table 9. Examples of good practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Comment/Observation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Serious cases of gender violation and gender-based hate speech and harassment have resulted in serious decisions taken by the Government against media defaulters</td>
<td>Comment: There are various decisions that have been taken regarding gender equality and freedom of expression or the role of media vis-à-vis gender equality. However, the revocation of Amazing Grace Christian radio broadcasting licence by the Rwanda Utilities regulatory Authority (RURA) in 2018 is a case to consider when one is discussing how regulation bodies act when woman’s value is attacked in Rwanda. The story begun on 29th January 2018 when a radio presenter Nicolas Niyibikora repeatedly insulted women referring to them as “evil”. For RURA, the radio violated article 21(4a and 4b) of Regulation No 004/R/MR-MCA/RURA/2017 of 30 June 2017 governing broadcasting services in Rwanda in regard to upholding public morality and Rwandan culture and values in general. Following audience uproar led by feminists on Twitter, RURA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
demanded an apology from the radio station. The station failed to comply, and RURA acted by revoking its broadcasting licence.

| Government commitment to gender and political will has resulted in increased compliance to gender equality in media practice despite the absence of gender sensitive media regulatory framework | Even though there is serious lack of gender provisions within media regulatory framework, this does not prevent media houses respecting gender equality, notably based on general gender provisions contained in the constitution and in other Rwandan laws |

4. Discussion

In regard to gender compliance under media law, the assessment finds out that there is a serious gap since both policies and laws seem to be silent when it comes to gender regulation in media.

However, such status does not prevent certain media to own their internal gender and sexual harassment policies which serve as a tool for gender mainstreaming even though there is still much to achieve.

In the absence of appropriate gender regulation and guidelines throughout the media regulatory framework, media houses and media organisations, like the rest of general population of Rwanda, refer to the constitutional and other pro-gender laws to mainstream gender.

Gender policies in media houses are in place but they are not well implemented due to the low understanding of gender concept in general. Trainings are needed to equip media managers and journalists with knowledge and skills on gender equality in media.

5. Recommendations

PAX PRESS proposes a number of recommendations aimed at improving gender equality through media regulation and self-regulation.

1. Rwanda Government should update and review media policy to address issues of inclusiveness as government principle, gender equality, gender mainstreaming in media and affirmative actions for increased female journalists in media industry and in media leadership positions.
2. The Law on Media and Access to information must be revised, notably through including provisions on how gender equality should be promoted in media and how GBV against women journalists must be prevented and punished.

3. Media houses and media organisations should initiate and implement their own gender and harassment policies and strategies for increased gender promotion and mainstreaming.

4. Institutions in charge of gender equality must collaborate with those in charge of media and define key gender indicators in media and decide how monitoring should be done.

5. All research and initiatives in media should consider gender indicators, showcase progress made and persistent challenges in gender and how they should be addressed.

6. Law makers should establish that gender equality must be mainstreamed in each and every media house.

7. All media houses should elaborate their own gender and sexual harassment policy and promote monitoring of their media contents to consider and include gender aspects.

Regulatory processes must be accompanied by transformation of mindsets in favour of promoting gender equality in and through the media industry.