MEDIA FOUNDATION FOR WEST AFRICA

Gender Monitoring Report

August, 2014

Political Parties Continue To Relegate Women In Media Discourse

1.0 Introduction

The struggle for women's inclusiveness in all levels of public life continues unabated across the globe. These efforts are often aimed at enabling women to play more active roles in democracy, good governance and the development efforts of their nations. This has been the mandate and experience of several women's organisations and stakeholders in Ghana.

One challenge militating against the efforts of several of these stakeholders in Ghana has been the difficulty in getting the media to consciously involve women in public and national discourse on their platforms. Meanwhile, the media, as a result of their agenda setting role, are crucial in providing a decisive public platform to all issues, including women and their participation in the discourse of national issues. That is, the media are able to shape public opinions on the qualities and competences of people based on their appearances and or contributions on their platforms. This makes women's involvement in media discourse of national issues very important.

To help gauge the extent to which women's voices are included in public discourse programmes on radio, the Media Foundation for West Africa (MFWA) and its partner, the Foundation for Security Development in Africa (FOSDA) have been monitoring selected programmes on 24 radio stations in Ghana since June 2014.

The monitoring forms part of the *Increasing Women's Voices and Participation in Public Discourse in Ghana Project,* funded by IBIS-Ghana. The aim of the project is to help increase women's participation in public discourse by influencing gender policies of media and political parties in the country.

This report is based on data compiled through a daily monitoring of the selected programmes in the month of August 2014. The daily monitoring was done by 24 trained monitors assigned to each of the 24 radio stations being monitored. The findings, as detailed below, show that the level of women's involvement in public discourse on radio has remained same for the months of July and August.

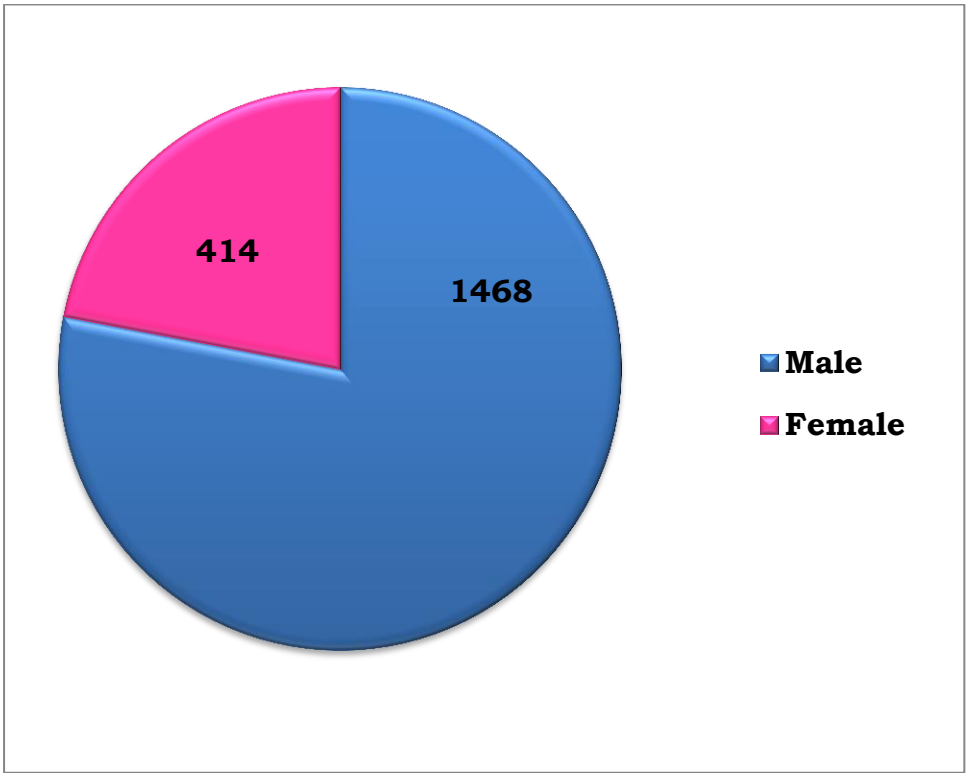
2.0 General Findings

In the month under review, a total of 900 programmes were monitored on the 24 radio stations being monitored. Specifically, the programmes monitored included news bulletins, current affairs and political discussion programmes.

The programmes recorded a total of 1,882 individuals who featured on the programmes monitored as moderators (hosts, presenters and other media personnel) and discussants (panellists, interviewees and callers). The 1,882 were made up of 808 moderators and 1,074 discussants.

Analysis of the gender of the 1,882 individuals showed that the percentage of males and females (moderators and discussants together) who participated in the programmes monitored in August did not vary from that of July 2014. Specifically, 78 percent of the 1,882 were males while the remaining 22 percent were females as shown in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Gender of Individuals who featured on programmes monitored



3.0 Specific Findings

The findings under this section are categorised into three sections: *Gender, Media Programming and Content*; *Treatment of Women on Radio*; and

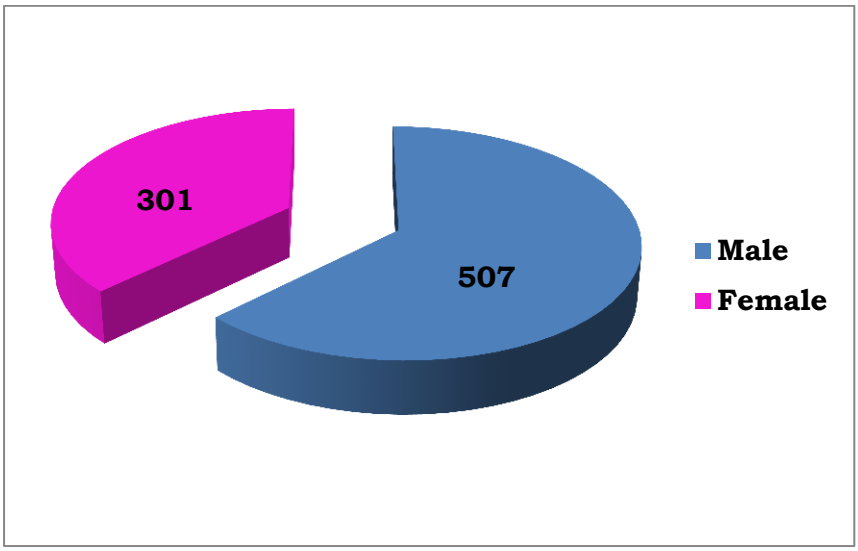
Performance of Women on Radio Programmes Monitored. The findings are elaborated below.

3.1 Gender, Media Programming and Content

3.1.1 Gender of Moderators/Presenters on Radio Programmes Monitored

The trend of male dominance among moderators reported in June and July continued in August. Out of a total of 808 moderators, 507 (63%) of them were males and the remaining 301 (37%) were females as shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Gender Imbalance between Male & Female Moderators



Whereas most (290) of the male moderators singlehandedly handled their programmes, there were relatively few (84) female moderators solely handling programmes. The females were more often paired with their male counterparts. So in the course of the month, 217 male and female moderators were paired in moderating programmes.

Stations that recorded significant numbers of female moderators uniquely anchoring programmes were *Joy FM* (16), *Radio Savannah* (12) and *Uniiq FM* (11).

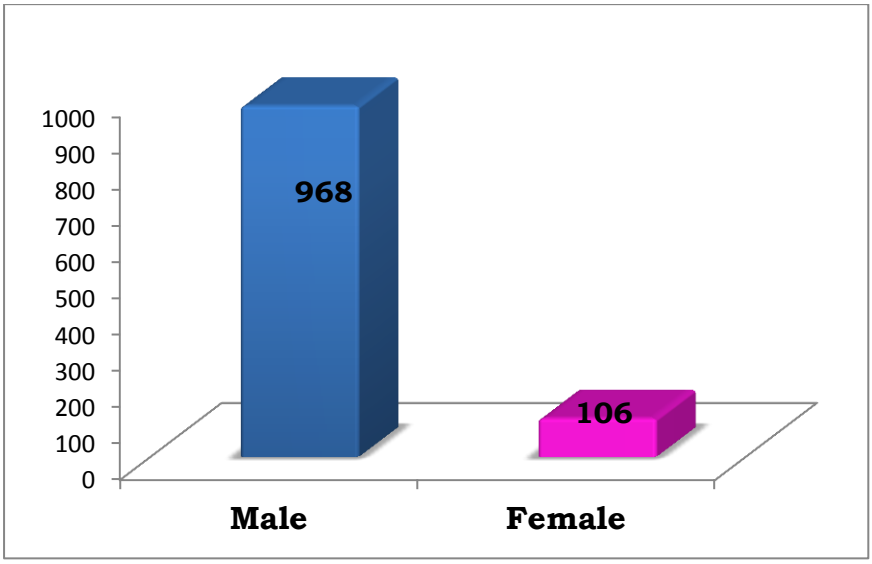
As found in July, Kumasi-based *Angel FM* (40), Accra-based *Peace FM* (28) and *Adom FM* (26) registered the highest pair of males and females anchoring programmes.

Over the one-month monitoring period, Wa-based *Radio Progress* and Tema-based *Meridian FM* (operated by a woman) were the two radio stations that did not field any female moderator on any of the programmes.

3.1.2 Gender of Discussants on Radio Programmes Monitored

There were a total of 1,074 discussants[1] on all the programmes monitored in the month under review. Out of these discussants, female representation was less than 10 percent. Male representation of discussants was once again highly dominant as Figure 2 below shows:

Figure 2: Gender Disparity of Discussants on Radio Programmes



The statistics in Figure 2 above shows that the imbalance between men and women is far more pronounced among discussants than it is among moderators.

3.1.2.1 Gender and Political Party Affiliation

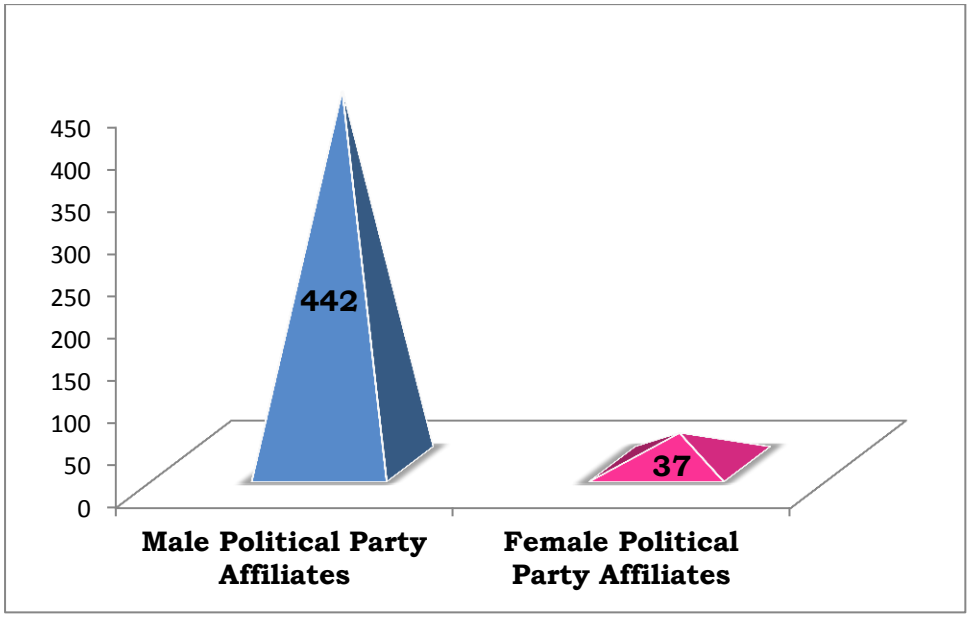
The findings of this month's monitoring corroborate that of June and July in terms of the political party affiliates who feature on radio programmes monitored. The findings over the three months have shown that members and supporters of political parties constitute a significant proportion of radio discussants.

For the month of August, affiliates of six (6) political parties participated in the programmes monitored. They constituted 479 of the 1,074 discussants who featured on all the programmes monitored. These parties were the New Patriotic Party (NPP), the National Democratic Congress (NDC), the Convention People's Party (CPP), the People's National Convention (PNC), the Progressive People's Party (PPP) and the National Democratic Party (NDP).

[1]Discussants refer to all individuals who featured on monitored programmes as panelists, interviewees and callers.

Out of the 479 political party discussants, only 37 (8%) were females as shown in Figure 3 below:

Figure 3: Gender Disparity Among Political Party Affiliates



Paradoxically, the political parties that had a lot of their members and affiliates participating in the programmes monitored recorded few female affiliates while those that did not have many members and affiliates featuring on the programmes monitored rather registering higher female representation. Thus, even though the NPP recorded the highest number of discussants, only six percent of its affiliates were females. The NDC that followed the NPP in terms of the number of affiliates recorded, fielded 10 percent women. The PNC which rather registered only five affiliates recorded the highest (40%) share of female representatives on the programmes monitored followed by the PPP. The specificities are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Gender of Political Party Affiliates

Political party	Male	Female	Percentage Ratio of Males to Females
NPP	220	13	**94% : 6%**
NDC	165	19	**90% : 10%**
PNC	3	2	**60% : 40%**
CPP	10	0	**100% : 0%**
PPP	8	3	**73% : 27%**
NDP	3	0	**100% : 0%**

3.1.3 Gender, Sources/Attribution and Voices of Actuality

In August, very few women were used or credited as sources in the news and other discussion programmes monitored. Out of a total of 483 sources acknowledged, female representation was less than 3 percent (13 individuals). On the other hand, more female voices were used for actuality; it however did not match in any way to the number of male sources and voices of actuality used. Details of these findings are provided in table 2 below:

Table2: Gender of Sources/Attribution and Voices of Actuality Used

Gender	Source / Attribution	Actuality
Male	470 (97.3%)	266 (72.7%)
Female	13 (2.7%)	100 (27.3%)
Total	483 (100%)	366 (100%)

3.1.4 Discussion of Gender-related Issues

In total, about 1,646 topical issues were discussed on the various programmes monitored in August. Dominant among them were issues on health (345), politics (241), elections (105) and conflict (86). Gender-related issues, however, constituted less than two percent (22) of all the issues discussed. This may be an indication that gender-related issues are not considered a prominent agenda item for the media in Ghana and that may be accounting for the low publicity given to women and gender-related issues.

The breakdown of the gender related issues discussed are as follows;

- Women and Children health issues – 5
- Girl child/rights education – 4
- Gender Mainstreaming and Women in Politics – 4
- Domestic Violence – 4
- Relationship issues – 2
- Women involved in crime – 1

3.2 Treatment of Women on Radio and Gender Related Issues

Findings in August show that female representatives on monitored programmes continue to be treated well. The male moderators and discussants were generally cordial towards the female discussants and moderators. It is worth noting that no incident of disparaging or gender stereotypical comment was recorded in the course of the monitoring.

3.3 Performance of Women on Radio Programmes Monitored

As part of the analysis, an assessment of the performance of the female participants was done. The assessment was based on the specific roles they played – either as moderators or discussants. For female moderators, the report assessed how they handled issues under discussion, allotment of time to discussants, the control of the panel, display of partisanship or otherwise and the general management of the programme. Female discussants were assessed on their knowledge of issues, their competence and confidence levels. They were also assessed on how articulate they were on issues and their presentation skills.

The findings in the month under review also show that most of the female moderators were fair, balanced and highly professional in their duty. Only one female moderator was cited for not being fair in her allotment of time to discussants.

Similarly, female discussants on the programmes monitored were very articulate, confident and knowledgeable on the issues discussed. However, two of them were cited as being less articulate in their submissions.

The above findings corroborate that of June and July which showed that the females who featured on the programmes monitored exhibited high levels of competence. These findings indicate that women can perform competently when given the opportunity.

4.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

Although it is positive that the level of women's involvement and participation in public discourse on radio did not decrease from that of July, it is also not impressive that it did not appreciate in any way. It is also quite worrying that since the project started three months ago, political parties have consistently fielded less than 10 percent of female discussants on the programmes monitored on all the 24 radio stations being monitored. This is particularly disturbing as the few women who have featured on the programmes have consistently proven their competence in delivering in equal measure as their male counterparts.

The MFWA and its partner, FOSDA are therefore calling on all stakeholders, especially media owners, managers and programme producers to consciously engage more women for their programmes as moderators, sources and discussants. We are also calling on political parties to exhibit their commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment by fielding women in their media engagement programmes. Such an effort will help in achieving the UN mandate for at least 30% women inclusion in public engagements.

Despite the consistent high commendation given the few women who featured on monitored programmes, it is important that political parties and media owners take active steps to develop the public speaking capacities of more women within their ranks. This will equip more females to competently moderate media programmes and ably represent their political organizations respectively.

The MFWA and FOSDA repeat the call on political parties and media institutions to adopt policies which ensure the active participation and development of women in media programmes and public engagements.