

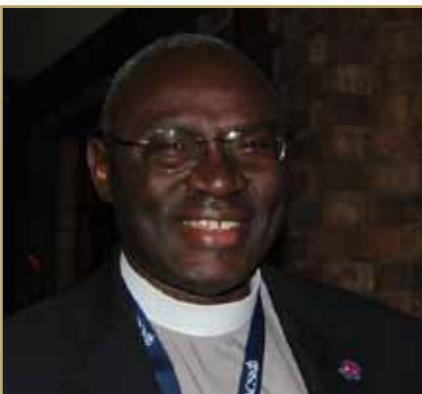
WHAT IS THE SITUATION OF WOMEN IN THE MEDIA IN UGANDA TODAY?

CAROL NAMBOWA



Equal opportunity is needed in the media –Crispin Kaheru, civil activist

I don't think the media has done an excellent job when it comes to reporting women's issues as many a time, women are represented negatively. Uganda's media will, for example, famously report a family wrangle where women are involved, unlike when women are making inroads in politics. Take a look at this year's presidential election. We had only one woman presidential candidate and I expected her to get the biggest media coverage, but that was not the case. Instead, she received the least. And to me, this is not right; we should try to avoid male dominance in the media. Equal opportunities should be given to all genders.



Women are making strides in the media – Rev. Dr John Ssenyonyi, Vice Chancellor, Uganda Christian University

They are not equally represented like men but good enough there are measures that have been put in place purposely to elevate the position of women in the media. For example in New Vision, there is a pullout – 'Her Vision' – which entirely reports about women's issues. Another point to look at is when jobs are being advertised. They invite all applicants regardless of the gender. I don't remember the last time I saw a job advert inviting only men and leaving out women. There are also many women journalists in the media today and these have played a big role in encouraging balanced reporting. They are not well represented but neither are they doing that badly.



There is balanced reporting on women issues – Hon. Allan Ssewanyana, Member of Parliament, Makindye East

I strongly believe there is balanced reporting when it comes to women's issues. Many programmes on televisions and radios are hosted by women, and even in print media, there are quite a number of women editors, some of them in highly influential positions. For example, New Vision and NTV are led by women. There are also many women editors in the many media houses around the country. Such women have been at the forefront of seeing that women are not discriminated against, misrepresented and that their issues are given enough prominence.



Women have equal platform in the media – Prof. Mwebesa Ndebesa, history professor, Makerere University

Yes, there is some misrepresentation when reporting about women, but going by what I see, there is a lot of inclusion of women in the media. There are so many women journalists with many of them news anchors, reporters, writers, presenters and even editors. With such platforms availed to them, women have been able to put their issues to the fore. Personally, I think we are moving in the right direction.



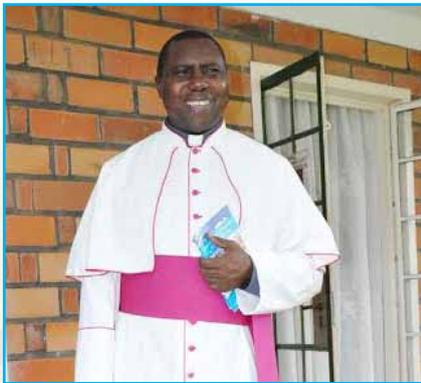
Women are often misrepresented in the media – Miria Matembe, women and political activist

Women are always misquoted, misrepresented and misinterpreted by various media channels. For example, tabloids have made it a point to survive by publishing indecent and nude pictures which, in fact, could have been ignored to protect the dignity of women. Such practices have undermined the woman's position in the society. There are so many good things to write about women that can push them to the next level. Nevertheless, some media houses have tried to push for the woman's cause.



The mainstream media is doing well –Cecilia Ogwal, Woman Member of Parliament, Dokolo district

The mainstream media has no doubt given women almost an equal platform as men. When you read a newspaper like New Vision or Daily Monitor, you realise that their stories have some gender balance and sensitivity in them. The same goes for television stations like NTV and NBS. Unfortunately, however, other media houses, especially the tabloids, have proved to be a letdown. They constantly report about women in a negative way. Why does Red Pepper, for example, invest all their money in finding nude pictures for women rather than writing stories that matter to the nation? Can't they sell their news without undermining the position of women in the society? Even when they have the facts, they twist them, giving a very wrong picture to their readers. I can say there is a lot of misrepresentation of women issues in tabloids.



Media is biased against women – Monsignor Wynard Katende, spokesperson, Catholic Church, Kampala diocese.

It is not balanced. Though some media houses are doing well when it comes to reporting women's issues, there is equally a gross misrepresentation of the female gender in a bigger number of media houses. Tabloids, for example, mainly focus on women's nudity to sell their papers, leaving out crucial issues that matter to women like empowerment, development and even education. The bias is in the fact that even men have nude pictures spread all over social media platforms but how come they are never prominently featured in the tabloids? This biased writing signifies a misrepresentation of women's issues.

I am heartbroken that the same crusty attitudes the war generation brought to gender **equality** are still being used against my **daughters.**

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