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MEDIA MONITORING PROJECT REVIEW – *The Media's coverage of the 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence*

January 2011

IN COMMEMORATION of the global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, MMPZ undertook a monitoring exercise over the 16 days to December 10th, 2010 to assess how the Zimbabwean media were playing their role of informing and educating the public about the 16 Days' campaign and the problems society faced in relation to gender-based violence.

MMPZ's findings exposed deficiencies in reporting this issue and the need for improvement.

The government media carried 56 stories related to gender-based abuse. Of these, forty-two appeared in the official papers, while the remaining 14 featured on the national broadcaster, ZBC.

Although these media appeared to have given the subject wide publicity, most of the stories remained qualitatively shallow.

For instance, 30 of the government papers' reports were simple court cases on sexual, physical and other forms of abuse. The issues they raised were rarely followed-up to assess the impact of such problems on the victims and society at large. In 29 of these reports males were reported as being the offenders. The remaining one was about a female offender.

Only 10 of these media's reports were based on gender awareness campaign activities by gender-based civic groups, although eight of them were self-generated. The other two originated from sources outside these media. They comprised articles by Magdalene Mathiba-Madibela, head of SADC's Gender Unit, and Mary Wandia, the Regional Women's Rights Coordinator for ActionAid in Kenya.

While the *Chronicle*, *Sunday News* (28/11), and *The Manica Post* (3/12) carried reports on the launch of the campaign, they did not follow up the story. *The Herald* and *The Sunday Mail* ignored the launch of the campaign altogether, although they did publish four reports that referred to it in later issues. Two of them were in the papers' entertainment sections and made reference to the campaign in passing. One was a news feature on the history of 16 Days of Activism tucked away on page nine of *The Herald* (5/12), while the remaining one was in the "In-Depth" section of *The Sunday Mail* (28/11). It was on a campaign by women organisations for the removal of Population

Services International (PSI) billboards, which they viewed as portraying women as **“sex objects”** and **“major transmitters of HIV/AIDS”**. One of the controversial billboards carries the message: **“Small house yako haina vamwe vadiwa here? Pafunge! (Does your girlfriend not have other lovers? Think about it)”**.

The coordinator of Young Women’s Leadership Initiative, Rudo Chigudu, said: **“The message being put across by the billboard is doing nothing but perpetrate violence against women. What picture of a woman is being portrayed by that billboard? Are we saying that women are promiscuous? Are we trying to defend men’s actions, that they too don’t have a responsibility to be faithful?”**

It was also ironic that while the world commemorated 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, the media did not view the arrest and detention of seven women in Mutare for wearing tight leggings as a human rights violation. The police said it constituted **“indecent exposure”** (*The Manica Post*, 3/12) and **“paraded”** these women **“around the city during a public awareness campaign against rape”**.

MMPZ condemns the police behaviour, including its perception that such kind of clothing exposed women to sexual assault.

ZBC performed worse. Thirteen out of its 14 stories were based on gender awareness workshops by government and women’s organizations, exposing the failure by ZBC to independently generate their own news. The remaining story was based on an interview with Goromonzi MP Beatrice Nyamupinga who complained that gender issues in Zimbabwe were mostly confined to meetings and workshops. She argued that this undermined efforts to promote gender equality and combat the violation of women’s rights.

The private Press published 18 reports. Of these, 12 were self-generated stories on gender awareness campaigns and the launch of the 16 Days’ campaign. The remaining six were generated from other sources such as SADC, the UN and international news agencies. *The Standard* (5/12) carried a five-page supplement to commemorate the campaign.

The supplement contained 13 stories. Six of them were Press statements from several civic organizations advocating for the promotion of the rights of women and children. The remainder were self-generated stories highlighting the plight of women and children from all walks of life.

Notably, the private electronic media largely ignored the 16 Days’ campaign.

The most quoted voices in gender-related stories in the government media during this campaign were mostly female.

They were accessed 36 times, while male voices were heard nine times.

The private papers quoted women nine times and men three times.

Fig 1: List of gender stories on ZBC

Station	Headline	Origin	Number & identity of sources
ZTV and Radio Zimbabwe (29/11/10, 8pm)	<i>Women urged to unite</i>	Report based on a function organized by the Deputy Prime Minister's office to commemorate 16 days of activism against gender violence	1.DPM Thokozani Khupe 2. Beatrice Nyamupinga - Chairperson for the women's parliamentary caucus 3. Gladys Kokorwe – Botswana's Ambassador to Zimbabwe
ZTV & Radio Zimbabwe (26 & 27/11/ 10, 1 & 8pm)	<i>Zimbabwe commemorates the 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence</i>	Based on an event to commemorate 16 Days of gender activism organized by the Ministry of Women's Affairs in Rusape	1. Olivia Muchena - Minister of Women's Affairs, Gender and Community Development 2. Christopher Mushowe – Manicaland provincial governor
ZTV (26/11/10, 8pm)	<i>Stakeholders urged to participate in eradicating gender-based violence: Nyamupinga</i>	News story	1. Beatrice Nyamupinga-chairperson of the women's parliamentary caucus team
ZTV (26/11/10, 2010, 8pm)	One stop centre commissioned in Rusape	News story on the commissioning of a one-stop centre for victims of gender-based violence	1. Olivia Muchena - Minister of Gender and Women's Affairs 2. Chief Makoni 3. Four unnamed victims of gender-based violence (1 man and three women)
Spot FM (8/12/10, 8pm)	<i>Zimbabwe urged to address gender violence</i>	News story based on celebrations to mark 16 Days of Gender Activism	1. Beatrice Nyamupinga (chairperson of the women's parliamentary caucus team) 2. Apolonia Chinyorera (Wadzanayi Trust)
Spot FM (10/12/10, 8pm)	<i>Women should be given higher positions in government? -</i>	Report is on government re-affirming its commitment to	1. Thokozile Mathuthu (Matabeleland North provincial governor)

	<i>Thokozile Mathuthu</i>	fulfill 50 percent representation of women in all areas of decision-making by the year 2015.	2. Sesel Zvidzai – (Deputy Local Government Minister)
Radio Zimbabwe (3/12, 1pm)	<i>Child friendly clinic officially opened at Mpilo Central Hospital</i>	Self-generated (Event report)	1. Douglas Mombeshora (Deputy Health Minister) 2. Dr Wedu Ndebele (Acting CEO – Mpilo Hospital) 3. Justice Euna Makamure (Family Support Trust board chairperson)
Radio Zimbabwe (4/12, 1pm)	<i>Liberate your minds, women urged</i>	Based on a workshop by an organization called the Economic Empowerment of Zimbabwe National Liberation Women's War Veterans	1. Olivia Muchena (Women's Affairs Minister)
Radio Zimbabwe (8/12, 8pm)	<i>Secure Children's future: First lady</i>	News story based on launch of National Child Survival Strategy for Zimbabwe report, which provides statistics on child mortality according to Zimbabwe Demographic and Health Survey.	1. Grace Mugabe (Zimbabwe's First Lady) 2. Henry Madzorera (Health Minister) 3. Brigadier-General Gerald Gwinji (Permanent secretary in the Health Ministry)

Fig 2: Gender stories on private online agencies

Station	Headline	Origin	Number & identity of sources
<i>Daily News</i> (8/12/10)	<i>Free maternity services for Hopley Farm residents</i>	News story	1.Thokozani Khupe (Deputy Prime Minister) 2. Rumbidzai Makamanzi (Ordinary person) 3. Unnamed woman (Ordinary person) 4. Simeon Mwanza (Amnesty International Researcher)

Fig 3: Gender reports in the official papers

Publication	Headline	Origin	Number & identity of sources
<i>Chronicle</i> (27/11)	<i>Wife basher gets suspended sentence</i>	Court report	State evidence
<i>Chronicle</i> (23/11)	<i>Hubby stabs wife several times</i>	Court report	State evidence
<i>Chronicle</i> (30/11)	<i>Woman fractures man's leg during fight</i>	Court report	State evidence
<i>Chronicle</i> (1/12)	<i>Boy (13) rapes toddler (5), hangs her on tree</i>	Court report	Jane Joan Phiri (lawyer)
<i>Chronicle</i> (2/12)	<i>Marriage certificates not licence to conjugal rights: Law expert</i>	News feature (Follow up to commemorate 16 Days of Gender Activism)	Nomzamo Mpofu (lawyer)
<i>Chronicle</i> (2/12)	<i>16 days against gender-based violence launched</i>	News story	1. Olivia Utete (permanent secretary in the Women's Affairs Ministry) 2. Netty Musanhu (Action Aid coordinator) 4. Rita Musina (ZRP)

<i>Chronicle</i> (2/12)	<i>2015: Towards gender equality</i>	Opinion piece. Magdalene Mathiba-Madibela (Head of the SADC Gender Unit)	N/A
<i>Chronicle</i> (3/12)	<i>Suspected rapist hangs self</i>	Court report	1. Andrew Ndlovu (ZRP) 2. Unnamed source
<i>Chronicle</i> (6/12)	<i>Jilted man smashes wife's car</i>	Court report	1. Mrs Sibanda (witness/victim)
<i>Chronicle</i> (7/12)	<i>Wife sues philandering hubby</i>	Court report	1. Sibongile Msipa (magistrate) 2. Millicent Chiyangwa (witness)
<i>Chronicle</i> (9/12)	<i>Man stoned to death, sister raped</i>	Court report	1. Mandlenkosi Moyo (ZRP) 2. Unnamed (witness)
<i>Chronicle</i> (9/12)	<i>Father jailed 12 years for raping daughter</i>	Court report	1. Cephas Sibanda (magistrate)
<i>Chronicle</i> (9/12)	<i>Byo City Council to probes rangers over sexual abuse allegations</i>	New story	Isaiah Magagula (councillor)
<i>Sunday News</i> (28/11)	<i>'Sex on wheels' as transit prostitution rises</i>	News feature	Two unnamed sources
<i>Sunday News</i> (28/11)	<i>Every woman's nightmare</i>	News feature marking the 16 Days by Delta Ndou	N/A
<i>Sunday News</i> (28/11)	<i>Wife leaves hubby for demanding anal sex</i>	Court report	1. Sibongile Khumalo (witness) 2. Andrew Khumalo (witness)
<i>Sunday News</i> (28/11)	20 years of campaigning against violence	News feature marking 16 Days campaign	N/A
<i>Sunday News</i> (28/11)	<i>Marriage, not a safe haven</i>	News story	1. Beatrice Thonhodzayi (SafAids) 2. Patience Kunaka (PSI) 2. Nicholas Marimire (Ordinary person)
<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Man bashes wife</i>	Court report	Bruce Maphosa (lawyer)

<i>News</i> (28/11)	<i>for gossiping</i>		
<i>Sunday News</i> (4/11)	<i>What a Chapter 37 marriage will cost you</i>	Opinion piece by Delta Ndou	N/A
<i>Sunday News</i> (4/12)	<i>Stepfather, daughter in court for incest</i>	Court report	State evidence
<i>Sunday News</i> (4/12)	<i>ZRP women network lauded</i>	News story	Tambudzani Mohadi (ZANU PF Senator for Beitbridge)
<i>The Herald</i> (25/11)	<i>Man rapes wheelchair-bound cousin</i>	Court report	Emmanuel Muchenga (lawyer)
<i>The Herald</i> (26/11)	<i>Motorist raped by policeman after crash</i>	Court report	Tendai Chiduwa (lawyer)
<i>The Herald</i> (26/11)	<i>Women Filmmakers Association of Zimbabwe Ndichirimupenyu Awards ceremony</i>	News story (refers to the start of the 16 days)	No source
<i>The Herald</i> (28/11)	<i>Pull down PSI billboards row</i>	News story (Messages on these billboards allegedly depict women as mostly responsible for the spread of HIV/AIDS)	1. Tariro Tandi (Musasa Project) 2. Rudo Chigudu (Young Women's Initiative) 3. Rutendo Mudzamiri (Young Women African Leaders' Movement) 4. Kumbirai Chatora (PSI)
<i>The Herald</i> (30/11)	<i>Film festival ends on high note</i>	News story (Makes reference to the 16 Days)	No source
<i>The Herald</i> (3/12)	<i>Protecting women in Africa key to development</i>	Opinion piece - Mary Wandia (a history and analysis of the 16 Days of gender activism)	N/A
<i>The Herald</i> (7/12)	<i>Khupe in Liberia</i>	News story (Gender	Thandiwe Hlabangana (principal director in the

		awareness campaign)	Deputy Prime Minister's Office)
<i>The Herald</i> (7/12)	<i>Cop rapes suspect</i>	Court report	Tendai Chiduwa (lawyer)
<i>The Herald</i> (8/12)	<i>Man rapes 8-year old</i>	Court report	Rogers Kachambwa (lawyer)
<i>The Herald</i> (8/12)	<i>African tradition and women's oppression</i>	Opinion piece by Tafataona Mahoso	N/A
<i>The Herald</i> (9/12)	<i>Women's fund receives US\$2m</i>	News story	Petronella Mubangu (Gender activist)
<i>The Manica Post</i> (26/11)	<i>Ex-lover raped as punishment</i>	Court report	Malvern Musarurwa (prosecutor)
<i>The Manica Post</i> (3/12)	<i>Woman kidnapped, raped</i>	Crime report	Brian Makomeke (ZRP)
<i>The Manica Post</i> (3/12)	<i>7 arrested for indecent exposure</i>	Crime report	Unnamed police spokesman
<i>The Manica Post</i> (3/12)	<i>Domestic violence hurts families</i>	News analysis by Abel Zhakata	
<i>The Manica Post</i> (3/12)	<i>'Punish perpetrators of gender-based violence'</i>	News story	Olivia Muchena (Women Affairs Minister)
<i>The Manica Post</i> (3/12)	<i>It's time Zimbabwe rises, fights gender-based violence</i>	News feature	1. Olivia Muchena (Women Affairs Minister) 2. Netty Musamhu (Msasa Project) 3. Chief Nyahada Makoni
<i>The Manica Post</i> (10/12)	<i>Rape cases on the rise in Manicaland</i>	News feature	1. Asst Inspector Jeffrey Mudzemba (ZRP) 2. Malvern Musarurwa (prosecutor) 3. Milton Chemhuru (Manicaland Provincial Medical Director)

Fig 4: Gender reports in the private Press

Publication	Headline	Origin	Number & identity of sources
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<i>The Standard</i> (28/11)	<i>No to violence against women</i>	Opinion piece by Chipso Masara	N/A
<i>The Zimbabwean</i> (2/12)	<i>A different form of gender abuse exposed</i>	News story	No source
<i>The Financial Gazette</i> (2/12)	<i>Gender violence under spotlight</i>	News feature	1. Chipso Banda (victim) 2. Merit Rumema (Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association)
<i>Newsday</i> (25/11)	<i>Infidelity ends in gruesome murder</i>	Crime report	1. Nyasha Cherekwa (perpetrator of violence) 2. Nicholas Ncube (witness)
<i>Newsday</i> (27/11)	<i>Headmaster granted bail</i>	Court report – alleged sodomy	1. Tapiwa Bhrebhende (lawyer) 3. State outline (judiciary)
<i>NewsDay</i> (29/11)	<i>‘Gender equality a right’</i>	News story	1. Thokozani Khupe (Deputy PM) Single-sourced
<i>NewsDay</i> (30/11)	<i>Engaging men, boys in eliminating violence against women</i>	News feature by Hillary Clinton (US Secretary for State)	N/A
<i>NewsDay</i> (1/12)	<i>Female artistes against domestic violence</i>	News story	Pamberi Trust
<i>NewsDay</i> (2/12)	<i>Police ‘forget’ role in fight against domestic violence</i>	News story - IPS, independent news agency	1. Tasha Ncube (ordinary person) 2. Irene Zwelibanzi (gender activist) 3. Unnamed police officer 4. Amanda Atwood (activist) 5. Rejoice Timire (Disabled Women Support Organisation)
<i>NewsDay</i> (3/12)	<i>16 days of activism and a quiet</i>	Opinion piece by Thembe Sachikonye	

	<i>revolution</i>		
<i>NewsDay</i> (4/12)	<i>There is no marriage worth dying for</i>	Opinion piece by journalist Ropafadzo Mapimhidze	N/A
<i>NewsDay</i> (6/12)	<i>'Set up one-stop units for gender-based violence victims'</i>	News story	1. Gender activist Ropafadzo Mapimhidze; 2. Jessie Majome (Deputy Minister for Women's Affairs)
<i>NewsDay</i> (8/12)	<i>Man infects stepdaughter with HIV</i>	Court report	1. Brian Mzemba (prosecutor)
<i>Zimbabwean On Sunday</i> (28/11)	<i>Political status of women remains low</i>	An advertorial from UN Population Fund	N/A
<i>Zimbabwean On Sunday</i> (28/11)	<i>Women and conflict in Southern Africa</i>	News story	UN Development Fund for Women
<i>Zimbabwean On Sunday</i> (5/12)	<i>Zim girls in bedrooms, not classrooms - Makoni</i>	News story	Betty Makoni (director of the Girl Child Network)
<i>Zimbabwean On Sunday</i> (5/12)	<i>Elders attack Makoni</i>	News story	1. John Mukwada (church member) 2. John Mashava (church member) 3. Timothy Zireva (church member)
<i>Zimbabwean On Sunday</i> (5/12)	<i>Women awarded for the fight against violence</i>	News story	Tsitsi Dangarembga (Women Filmmakers of Zimbabwe)

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