

**ANNEX 5 – METHODOLOGICAL OUTLINE FOR MEDIA MONITORING CONDUCTED BY THE POLICY ANALYSIS AND POLICY ADVICE GROUP (PAPAG),  
GENDER-BIASED SEX SELECTION PREVENTION POLICY EXPERTS (GIUSSEPPE)**

## THE PURPOSE

* 1. The task is launched to promote gender balanced news output in the national media, thereby contributing to higher value of girls in Armenian society and further prevention of gender-biased sex selection. This will be achieved by deploying an attempt to discover gender biases that contribute towards son preference and, eventually, towards gender-biased sex selection in Armenia.
  2. The monitoring will help to explore the way that electronic media outlets present relevant events and will outline the critical gaps in national media’s ability to respond to the prevention of the discriminatory practice of non-medical sex-selection. It will further contribute towards shaping media policies for enhanced independence and quality of content.
  3. The monitoring will enable development of an early warning capacity of biased and incendiary coverage of reproductive rights, non-medical sex-selection, fertility, as well as gender sensitive issues at large shaping the value of boys and girls, through consistent media monitoring and evaluation. The intention of this document is to help the Gender-Biased Sex Selection Prevention Policy Experts Team to familiarize themselves with the methodology of media monitoring which will be applied in the course of this task.

## THE SCOPE AND INSTRUMENTS

* 1. The monitoring will explore different aspects of the media system such as the visualisation of the media-sphere, the sentimental and objectivity analysis of news content etc.
  2. Media monitoring will be practically achieved by a combination of technologies, including electronic search engines and human readers, evaluation and analysis. It will employ quantitative and qualitative methodological tools according to international standards for media monitoring. Given its comprehensive content-oriented approach, it is specially designed to provide in-depth feedback on non-discrimination, gender sensitivity and diversity in media reporting, including coverage of chosen subjects/themes.
  3. The quantitative component of the monitoring consists of retrospective data collection from a representative sample of 15-17 web-based media outlets for at least three-year period.
  4. Web-based outlets will be selected based on mixed criteria including the circulation (average monthly number of visitors), audience, etc. The estimated highest monthly circulation is approx. 18,000,000 and the lowest is approx. 60,000. The monitoring will cover media resources from each decile as described in Table 1.

***Table 1. Monthly circulation of web-based media outlets in Armenia***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Circulation** | **Number of media resources monitored** |
| > 10,000,000 | 1-2 |
| 5,000,000-10,000,000 | 1-3 |
| 2,000,000-5,000,000 | 1-3 |
| 1,000,000-2,000,000 | 1-3 |
| 500,000-1,000,0000 | 1-3 |
| 100,000-500,000 | 1-3 |

* 1. To monitor the web-based outlets, monitors will use a set of keywords that shall be elaborated prior to data collection appealing to the relevant subjects and themes. The keywords will identify repeated patterns in news coverage and reporting.
  2. The monitors will look for broad forms of emphasis and selection, such as headlines, images and charts, content placement and sequencing (what is put first and what left for later in a story, placement of stories in the news).
  3. The monitors will further look for master narratives or themes (e.g. who/what are the “villains”/antagonists and who are the “good guys”/protagonists”? what is assumed to be the source of conflict? what stories or aspects of stories are not being covered?)
  4. The monitors will also look for stylistic clues, i.e. language choices, modes of reference, use of quotes and attribution. They will think about other ways the relevant facts could be turned into stories (e.g. look at news coming from a different point of view, think about possible other ways of telling the story, etc.)
  5. The monitors will further explain the underlying assumptions of the frames they have discovered. They will specifically evaluate what do these frames imply is important, what do they take for granted, what do these frames exclude from discussion, what world views or "tacit little theories about what matters" are these frames reinforcing, would different frames lead to son preference or to a more balanced values of girls and boys, etc.
  6. Quantitative analysis will explicitly evaluate whether the information about selected monitored subjects is positive, negative, or neutral in its content. Positive and negative ratings refer to whether or not a reader is offered a positive or negative impression of the subject or topic. These data are recorded for all stories and presented graphically to illustrate differences between outlets and differences over time.
  7. The monitors will assess behaviour of media outlets, not the monitored subjects. Positive and negative evaluation refers to whether or not a reader is offered a positive or negative impression of the subject or topic. If there is no positive or negative evaluation, the message is rated as neutral. It is also important to understand the context in which the message is reported, giving the message positive or negative light just by the nature of the story or event reported.
  8. The tone of the coverage is positive if the way the message is presented and the nature of the message are both positive, similarly if both factors are negative, the tone is negative. The neutral tone is the result of both factors being neutral. If the way the message is presented and the context of the message do not match, monitors have to determine the tone according to what is the prevailing factor (so it could be either the content of the story or context).
  9. The evaluation mark is thus attached to all individual report-bound subjects to determine whether the subject was presented in positive, negative, or neutral light. A five-level evaluation scale will be used as described in Table 2. The monitors will consider the actual evaluation (judgment) on the monitored subject and also the context of the story or item.

***Table 2. Five-level evaluation scale***

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Grade** | **Subject was presented in a light:** | **News coverage is:** |
| Grade 2 | Very positive | Favourable |
| Grade 1 | Positive | Favourable |
| Grade 0 | No positive or negative connotations | Solely factual |
| Grade -1 | Very negative | Damaging |
| Grade -2 | Negative | Damaging |

* 1. In order to eliminate any elements of subjectivity present in qualitative analysis, the Senior Expert on Gender-Biased Sex Selection Prevention Policies in Media Sector, who is also the monitoring team leader, should do frequent checks on how individual monitors analyse the media. Where there is a difference of opinion over the evaluation of a particular item, the monitoring team (or a team leader) evaluates the item before making a final decision on its “tone”. The monitoring team leader may also seek for further support from ICHD team if needed.
  2. The five-grade scale is designed to provide monitors with a larger scale of choice they are to make in evaluating the presentation of gender sensitive subjects and themes. Balanced news coverage means that a media outlet attempts to cover events in a balanced, fair and objective manner, provide informative reporting and do not reflect/reproduce any discriminatory gender-biased standpoint or gender stereotyping.
  3. In the quantitative monitoring the unit of analysis is each headline for web-based media outlets. In addition, the unit of context is also the news programs in a longer period (entire monitoring duration: three years for web-based media outlets) – to determine if a story is balanced over a period of time (e.g. if it is reported over a longer period).
  4. Indicators in media monitoring have to meet two important criteria. They must be both *reliable* and *valid*.
  5. *Reliability* means that the indicators should be consistently identified by any trained monitor. As such, assigning each code would always produce the same result regardless of who is doing the monitoring. This is achieved first by selecting indicators that are objectively verifiable – they are not the result of subjective opinions or preference on the part of a monitor. Keyword-related indicators are clearly objective, as are pre-determined lists of codes that identify different topics which appear in the news. Consistency is achieved by a systematic and thorough training, mentoring and practice.
  6. *Validity* means that the selected indicators actually show what they are intended to show. Indicators must be selected for a clear purpose and not interpreted to show more than they actually indicate. For example, counting the number of times women are cited as sources does not necessary indicate that the media have a gender bias.[[1]](#footnote-1) If women’s voices are under-reported there are several possible explanations for this. It might be media bias, but it may equally be that institutions of government, political parties and businesses do not choose women to represent them.
  7. The common indicators that are generally used in the monitoring methodologies include the sources of information identified in articles and the topics that are covered. For more complex evaluation, other indicators should also be added. Statistical analysis of these indicators is not particularly difficult. The monitoring data gathered during a monitoring exercise are descriptive rather than inferential. This means that analysis only addresses the actual articles that have been monitored and does not attempt to predict the characteristics of other articles that have not been monitored (by techniques such as regression analysis).
  8. The main analytic techniques used are *aggregation* and *cross-tabulation*. *Aggregation* simply consists of adding up (and comparing) data such as the amount of positive, negative of neutral coverage of monitored subjects. *Cross-tabulation* is easily carried out even with the basic spread sheet software, compares the distribution of frequency of a variable with another variable, to check their degree of association. This could indicate, for example, if a subject was more negatively covered by one outlet than by another. A more complex analysis could show the association between the topics reported by the media and the sources that they use. The possibilities for crossing variables are extensive.
  9. The key questions to be answered when monitoring the news programmes include: was there any specific gender bias in exposure of women and men in the article? Were context related informants/experts given a fair amount of space reflecting alternative opinions? Is there much more coverage of one expert/theme than another? Are there gender skewed themes in terms of media bias? Can this be justified by news values? Was there any bias in quality? Does the tone of coverage favour one gender over another?
  10. The direct speech segments of actors’ speeches are more attractive for the readers and also they give actors more “direct” access to media to convey their messages, in contrast with reproduced segments of articles presenting actors indirectly. However, it is editors or journalists who select segments of the direct speech that appear in the news programmes, not the actors themselves. The space and time given to actors cross-tabulated with the tone of the coverage and with the direct speech provide by far more accurate picture of the approach and bias the media have taken in their coverage of relevant actors.
  11. The list of monitored topics includes but is not limited to: non-medical sex-selection, gender-biased sex selection, sex-selective abortions, fertility and reproductive choices, reproductive rights and reproductive health, infertility, assisted reproductive technologies and sex-selection. reproductive autonomy, medical ethics, earning models in families, labour participation of women and men, employment, education, balancing work and family roles and responsibilities for women and men, value of girl child, masculinity and femininity, family roles, inheriting practices, gender, stereotypes, business, pension security, violence, conflict/war and peace, security and uncertainties, elections and political participation, social assistance, role of religion and church, other.
  12. Qualitative media monitoring is used to assess the performance of media against measures, such as ethical or professional standards, that cannot be easily quantified. These standards include but are not limited to balance, non-discrimination, accuracy, timing, choice of issues, omission of information, sequencing and positioning of items, derogative language. For this particular qualitative analysis, the monitors will be asked to:
  + identify the sources for a story;
  + evaluate the placement of selected stories and items in comparison with other reported topics and issues (media outlets);
  + evaluate the overall quality of information provided about selected subjects and topics;
  + evaluate journalist’s knowledge of the reported subject and topic;
  + evaluate the ability of the author to work with facts and information;
  + evaluate the ability of the author to engage audience;
  + overall impression of how the media outlet covers selected subject and topics related to masculinity and femininity, boy preference, sex selection and fertility, reproductive right and technologies;
  + in case an interview is conducted, are the questions fair or “loaded”;
  + how does the language shape the audience’s understanding and perception of a story;
  + does the media outlet use certain language, graphics and camera angles to influence the audience’s perception of the monitored subjects and topics;
  + evaluate journalist’s involvement, in particular (lack of impartiality) in the story;
  1. Other relevant issues that should be included into qualitative analysis of gender bias affecting non-medical sex selection are as follows:
  + Do journalists/media adhere to principles of even handed, non-sensational reporting when it comes to reporting on Sex-Selection-Selective Abortions-Fertility Pressure-Boy Preference (SS-SA-FP-BP)? Are journalists providing analytical coverage of issues related to SS-SA-FP-BP, looking deeper into some of the more difficult or even controversial issues, or are they playing it “safe” instead?
  + Are ‘human stories’ incorporated for ‘human face’ element sake or do they lead to a proper journalistic investigation?
  + Do journalists/media only identifying the problem related to SS-SA-FP-BP or do they attempt to establish a public forum at local level, aimed at solving the problem?
  + Are journalists/media producing their own original stories or do they simply use (“recycle”) stories taken from news wires or “international” media?
  + Are journalists ‘making a point’ on a particular side rather than providing a balanced objective view on the issue or problem in question?
  + Are journalists/media able to work with a range of different sources of information (diverse sources of expertise)? When using data or statements from officials, do journalists/media confront and question them? do they use proper fact-checking?
  + Are media preserving correctness in the terminology they use while reporting on SS-SA-FP-BP?
  + Are media able to differentiate between reproductive choice and discrimination, and medical and non-medical reasons?
  1. Other relevant issues that should be included into qualitative analysis related to the media coverage of SS-SA-FP-BP issues are as follows:
  + Is there any relevant information missing? (media often avoid the problem of how to cover politically or socially sensitive stories by simply not covering them at all)
  + Choice of issues (Does the selection of news items favour the agenda of one contender or another, even if there is no explicit bias?)
  + Similar style of coverage (Are SS-SA-FP-BP issues reported in similar ways or do only some of them?)
  + Positioning items (Are items related to specific contenders placed alongside other unfavourable stories to create an unfavourable impression?)
  + Priority
  + Sexist language (Does a journalists use language or descriptions that are expressing sex-supremacism or sex-stereotyping)
  + Manipulative use of headlines, film, picture, charts and sound (camera angles, distance of the camera, light, quality of the sound, use of footage which does not correspondent with the content of the story or which provide negative or positive tone to the story)
  1. A key component of the monitoring methodology is that it is a qualitative approach to monitoring the content of the media. Qualitative analysis evaluates the performance of selected media outlets against ethical and professional standards, such as balance, accuracy, timely, choice of issues, omission of information, stereotyping, positioning of items, inflammatory language that cannot be easily quantified. These data are reported separately and integrated in the comments and conclusions of the Final Report.
  2. For each article in web-based media outlet, monitors complete a monitoring form as indicated in CHAPTER III of this Annex. These forms will be entered by monitors into a database and checked by the Senior Expert.
  3. The methodologies described above could be used in conjunction with a widely available spread sheet (e.g. Microsoft Excel) or database software, with more sophisticated analysis carried out through a specialized statistical package, if required. The last phase of working with data is data processing – computer data processing and storage has several advantages:
  + Possibility to store data;
  + Flexibility and simple data manipulation (e.g. specific data selection and evaluation)
  + Visualisation abilities and infographics, its direct use in presentations
  1. Since the monitoring forms consist of a relatively small number of different data types and the data can be easily organised according to the given criteria, Microsoft Excel (in combination with the whole Microsoft Office package) is suitable for processing the results of monitoring process. The data that is acquired during the monitoring consist of subject, outlet, evaluation, item start, item end, topic.
  2. Media monitoring activities are conducted by a team of monitors (managed by a subcontractor), who were trained in the procedures and techniques of media monitoring, and supervised by the Senior Expert under overall guidance of ICHD. The necessary equipment of the media monitoring team requires for their daily tasks include computer workstation and internet connectivity, software for word and data processing, and equipment allowing the viewing, coding and input into computers of all information received from the monitoring activities. In addition, there should be capacity to store information.
  3. Each monitor monitors all relevant online media articles, and answers questions included in the qualitative forms. Monitors enter their name, the name of the monitored outlet, the name, type and date of the article. The form also contains the name/affiliation of the monitored subject, headlines, etc.

## MONITORING FORMS

* 1. The Monitoring Form for web-based media outlets is described in the Table 3.

***Table 3. Monitoring Form for web-based media outlets***

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Qualitative analysis questionnaire: *web-based* media outlets | | | |
| Monitor’s name: | | Date of article appearance/publication: | |
| Media outlet: | Name of the article: | | Number of stories: |
| Do journalists/media adhere to principles of even-handed, non-sensational reporting when it comes to reporting on SS-SA-FP-BP? Are journalists providing analytical coverage of issues related to SS-SA-FP-BP, looking deeper into some of the more difficult or even controversial issues, or are they playing it “safe” instead? (A leading question for the assessment: Are the facts and judgements in a sound cause and effect relationship? Or the judgements and assessments detached from the factual knowledge? Is there an emotionally charged statement(s) in the article?) | Are journalists/media producing their own original stories or do they simply use (“recycle”) stories taken from news wires or “international” media? (When taking from international media do the journalists adhere to the facts and the overall spirit of the article? When shortening the article do they keep the logic of the storyline or there are elements of selective reporting?) | | Please note any statements or reporting you feel were distorted, untruthful, or prejudicial against women/men (PLEASE COLOR THE TEXT)   * Does a journalist make statements that are not factual? (Leading question: are there any statements in the article that are not backed up by facts?) * Does a journalists use language or descriptions that are expressing sex-supremacism or sex-stereotyping? * Does a journalist report as fact similar statements made by anyone else? * Does a journalist make statements that may be attacks on women who had abortion and/or their families? |
| Do journalists/media only identify the problem (with SS-SA-FP-BP) or do they attempt to establish a public forum at family, community and society levels, aimed at solving the problem? | Did the media outlet appear to make an effort to include different points of views and information in the items about SS-SA-FP-BP? | |
| Are journalists/media able to work with a range of different sources of information (diverse sources of expertise)? When using data or statements from officials, do journalists/media confront & question them? Do they use proper fact-checking? | Was there any description or language used that you feel was biased or incorrect? (PLEASE HIGHLIGHT THE TEXT). Does the journalist use specific words or descriptions that give a negative or positive image of a particular gender? | | Did you note any “MEDIA EFFECTS” that could indicate bias, distortion or manipulation by the media? (PLEASE BOLD THE TEXT) Do the video images, photos, or graphics used in the article present the subject fairly and relevant to the subject of the article. Do the images presented appear to accurately reflect the facts of the situation? |
| Are media preserving correctness in the terminology they use while reporting on SS-SA-FP-BP? | Are media able to differentiate between medical and non-medical reasons? | | Are media able to differentiate between reproductive choice and discrimination? |
| Were any contenders in connection with the SS-SA-FP-BP coverage excluded from this broadcast? Over time, does this indicate a pattern by this media outlet? | Are ‘human stories’ incorporated for ‘human face’ element sake or do they lead to a proper journalistic investigation? | | Are journalists ‘making a point’ on a particular side rather than providing a balanced objective view on the issue or problem in question? |

## INDICATIVE LIST OF MONITORED MEDIA

* 1. The indicative list of web-based media outlets is described in Table 4 below.

***Table 4. Web-based media outlets and their indicative monthly circulation as of 1 April 2016***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Media Outlet** | **Indicative Circulation** |
| News.am | 18.334.004 |
| 1in.am | 6.400.000 |
| Tert.am | 6.272.162 |
| Blognews.am | 5.232.273 |
| Aravot.am | 4.797.81 |
| 168.am | 2.741.984 |
| Hraparak.am | 2.130.067 |
| Shamshyan.com | 2.000.000 |
| Lragir.am | 1.800.000 |
| Hetq.am | 1.637.895 |
| Times.am | 1.184.980 |
| Panorama.am | 1.118.835 |
| Panarmenian.net | 970.000 |
| Yerkir.am | 820.000 |
| Galatv.am | 670.000 |
| Civilnet.am | 650.000 |
| Mediamax.am | 430.000 |

## SELECTED LITERATURE

* + Giovanna Maiola, Michael Meyer-Resende, Regulation of Mass Media Activities during Elections
  + Marek Mračka (MEMO 98) and Richard Carver (Oxford Brookes University/Oxford Media Research), Monitoring Moldovan Broadcasters: Methods and Techniques
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  1. Other sources related to Gender and the Media used for developing this outlines included:
  + World Association for Christian Communication (WACC). Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP). Media & Gender Monitor (A bi-annual publication from WACC that seeks to address a wide range of gender and communication issues).
  + Media and Gender: A Scholarly Agenda for The Global Alliance on Media and Gender: This volume charts the current status of research on gender and media, highlights gaps and suggest directions for future research and action. Published by UNESCO, Paris, 2014.
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  + Communicating for Change: Getting Voice, Visibility and Impact for Gender Equality: A handbook for editors and journalists published by Inter Press Service, 2009.
  + From Counting Women to Making Women Count: Focussing on women in media development programmes, this publication "attempts to orient media development practitioners with both a historical and contemporary view of key policies, studies and approaches to gender integration". By Manisha Aryal, Internews and Craig LaMay, Northwestern University. Published by Internews, 2013.
  + The Gender and Media Handbook: Promoting Equality, Diversity & Empowerment. By the Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (MIGS) in Cyprus.
  + INSTRAW Progress Report: Women and The Media: By the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women
  + IWMF Global Report on the Status of Women in the News Media: Published by the International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF), this report presents data on the status of women working in news media organizations around the world.
  + Seen but Not Heard How Women Make Front Page News: An analysis of front-page news in British newspapers with respect to the portrayal and representation of women.
  + Virtual Resource Centre: A special database by Gender Links containing Southern Africa case studies.
  + Violence and Harassment about Women in the News Media - a Global Picture: A report by the International Women's Media Foundation (IWMF) on violence and threats women journalists face in the course of their work.
  + WMF Media Guide to Gender Neutral Coverage of Women Candidates and Politicians: A guide by the Women's Media Center (WMC) on gender neutral media coverage of women politicians.
  + WMF The Status of Women in the US Media in 2014: A report by Women's Media Center (WMC) on the status of women in American media.

1. However, when the media could have had the choice of inviting a female expert along with a male one instead opted to only ask for the opinion of the men then it may have count for media bias. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)