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SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR FOR FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION

**IACHR** Inter-American  
Commission on  
Human Rights



# **WOMEN JOURNALISTS AND NEWSROOMS**

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**WOMEN JOURNALISTS AND NEWSROOMS  
PROGRESS, CHALLENGES, AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO  
PREVENT VIOLENCE AND TO FIGHT AGAINST DISCRIMINATION**

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Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression



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# **INTRODUCTION**





1. On March 8, 2019, the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) published the report “Women Journalists and Freedom of Expression: Discrimination and gender-based violence faced by women journalists in the exercise of their profession” (hereinafter, “Women journalists and freedom of expression”), developed in coordination with the IACHR’s Rapporteurship on the Rights of Women. The report surveys the situation of women journalists in the region and examines the obligations of States and the private sector in eliminating the main obstacles and the special or additional risks faced by women journalists in the exercise of their freedom of expression, which are linked to gender-based inequality and discrimination against women.
2. The Office of the Special Rapporteur continues to record acts of violence against women journalists, including murders, sexual violence, and online violence; these are worrisome evidence that women journalists are disproportionately and habitually subjected to various forms of violence and discrimination based on their gender, both in the exercise of the profession and in the places where they carry out their work. Within the newsrooms, this discrimination and inequality manifests itself in various ways, including underrepresentation, occupational segregation as a product of existing stereotypes and patterns in the assignment of tasks and activities, wage gaps, job insecurity, lack of guarantee of working conditions, as well as numerous obstacles to holding management and decision-making positions.
3. In response to these specific and differentiated challenges faced by women journalists, the Office of the Special Rapporteur has focused its efforts on promoting and protecting the right to freedom of expression and participation in public life of women journalists in the region through the various mechanisms of the Inter-American System for the Protection of Human Rights. In this sense, the case of *Bedoya Lima et al. v. Colombia* represents one of the most relevant jurisprudential growths in terms of inter-American standards for the protection of journalists. From then on, the Inter-American Court recognized that acts of gender-based violence are “symptomatic of a pattern of structural discrimination against women rooted in stereotypes of female inferiority”<sup>1</sup>. In this sense, it was noted that when adopting protection measures for journalists, States must apply a strong differential approach, “conduct a risk analysis, and implement protection measures that consider the aforementioned risk faced by women journalists as a result of gender-based violence”<sup>2</sup>. Past statements issued by the IACHR and by the Office of the Special Rapporteur served as a basis for the Inter-American Court to conclude in said judgement that “the risk faced by women journalists who work in conflict zones is greater due to their double vulnerability for exercising journalism in

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<sup>1</sup> I/A Court H.R., [Case of Bedoya Lima et al. v. Colombia](#). Merits, Reparations and Costs. Judgment of August 26, 2021. Series C No. 431. Para. 50.

<sup>2</sup> I/A Court H.R., [Case of Bedoya Lima et al. v. Colombia](#). Merits, Reparations and Costs. Judgment of August 26, 2021. Series C No. 431. Para. 91

situations of high conflict or violence and in contexts that reinforce gender subordination”<sup>3</sup>.

4. Also, as part of these efforts, during the 2022 World Press Freedom Day Conference, the Office of the Special Rapporteur, together with the special rapporteurs for freedom of expression of the United Nations (UN), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) published the Joint Declaration on freedom of expression and gender justice. The declaration develops a series of recommendations, among them the obligation that States have to “protect and promote the participation and equality of women in the media sector through laws, policies, and practices that protect the safety of women journalists, incentivize gender equality and encourage and protect expression by and about women”<sup>4</sup>. Similarly, it highlights the importance of States, media organizations and representatives of women journalists collaborating jointly in the development of integrated prevention, protection, and prosecution mechanisms for cases of online sexual and gender-based violence. Additionally, recognizing the importance and determining role played by the media, the declaration calls on them to implement strategic measures aimed at increasing the representation of women within their offices, and “play a transformative role in dismantling gender stereotypes and opposing gender bias and violence against women”<sup>5</sup>.
5. With the purpose of contributing continuously to the protection of the right to freedom of expression and the practice of journalism, the Office of the Special Rapporteur offers in this report an analysis of the patterns of discrimination that women journalists and media workers experience in newsrooms and/or in their workplace, through the lens of inter-American standards on the matter, and with an emphasis on the underrepresentation and horizontal and vertical segregation of women in the media, the wage gap between men and women, the absence of strategies to ensure that those who carry out caregiving tasks are not affected by their professional careers and/or job opportunities, as well as other practices of intersectional discrimination. Similarly, the report considers the different forms of gender-based violence within the media, including sexual violence and harassment. Recognizing their leading role in the matter, the report offers guidelines on the

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<sup>3</sup> I/A Court H.R., [Case of Bedoya Lima et al. v. Colombia](#). Merits, Reparations and Costs. Judgment of August 26, 2021. Series C No. 431. Para. 48.

<sup>4</sup> The United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Representative on Freedom of the Media, the Organization of American States (OAS) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information. May 3, 2022. [Joint Declaration on freedom of expression and gender justice](#).

<sup>5</sup> The United Nations (UN) Special Rapporteur on the Promotion and Protection of the Right to Freedom of Opinion and Expression, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Representative on Freedom of the Media, the Organization of American States (OAS) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR) Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Expression and Access to Information. May 3, 2022. [Joint Declaration on freedom of expression and gender justice](#).

actions that media companies are called upon to implement to eradicate and address these practices.

6. In conclusion, this report highlights some of the main progress and challenges in recent years in relation to these patterns of discrimination and violence against women journalists and media workers and analyzes the extent to which companies have adopted policies or other strategic actions on the matter. Based on this analysis, the report presents a series of guidelines that aim to contribute to the strengthening of ongoing efforts and encourage companies to address pending challenges.
7. Finally, the Office of the Special Rapporteur is appreciative of the contributions and inputs received through public consultation by different stakeholders, including Member States of the Organization of American States (OAS), civil society organizations, academia, international organizations, and other actors, who participated and sent their comments for this report starting at the end of 2021 and through the course of 2022. In addition, a series of consultations and closed sessions were held with experts from the region with the technical support of the IACHR's Rapporteurship on the Rights of Women. This report was approved by the plenary of the IACHR in the framework of the 184 Period of Sessions that took place in the city of Washington D.C., United States. We welcome the contributions received and we hope that this report constitutes a guide aimed at strengthening ongoing processes within the media of the region.



CHAPTER I

**DISCRIMINATION AGAINST  
WOMEN JOURNALISTS IN THE  
MEDIA**



8. As the Office of the Special Rapporteur pointed out in its report “Women journalists and freedom of expression,” although the number of women who work as journalists has increased in recent years,<sup>6</sup> entrenched patterns of gender-based discrimination still “represent an enormous challenge for the ability of women to start and develop a career in the field of journalism on equal terms with men.”<sup>7</sup> The experiences reported by women journalists themselves in recent years confirm this trend, which seems to have worsened in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>8</sup>
9. In Argentina, a survey carried out in 2018 determined that 43% of women journalists report situations of discrimination “for the fact of being women”.<sup>9</sup> Similarly, 40% denounce situations of “discrimination for not fitting with the beauty standards of today’s society.”<sup>10</sup>
10. 6. In Brazil, women journalists and media workers denounce that “machismo, sexism, and misogyny are still present in the mass media.”<sup>11</sup> Of a group of more than 400 women journalists from all over the country who participated in a survey carried out in 2017, 87% reported having experienced at least one situation of gender-based discrimination.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). [Radiografía De Género: Día Internacional De La Mujer 2016](#). March 8, 2016.

<sup>7</sup> United Nations General Assembly. [The safety of journalists and the issue of impunity. Report of the Secretary General](#). A/72/290. August 4, 2017. Para. 6.

<sup>8</sup> More than half of the 550 women journalists from 52 countries who participated in a global survey carried out by the International Federation of Journalists in June 2020 reported “an increase in gender inequalities in companies, with devastating consequences in their reconciliation of work and private life (62%), work responsibilities (46%) and salaries (27%).” Likewise, more than 75% of them “saw their level of stress increase” due to “working in isolation, harassment by bosses, caring for the family and education at home, domestic tensions, increased workload and frequent short deadlines, long working hours, psychological impact of COVID coverage, fear of job loss.” International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). COVID-19 has increased gender inequalities in the media, according to an IFJ survey. July 2020.

<sup>9</sup> Argentine Journalism Forum. [Mujeres periodistas en la Argentina. Situación laboral y rol profesional de las comunicadoras en el país](#). November 2018. Page 24.

<sup>10</sup> Argentine Journalism Forum. [Mujeres periodistas en la Argentina. Situación laboral y rol profesional de las comunicadoras en el país](#). November 2018. Page 24.

<sup>11</sup> Brazilian Network of Journalists and Communicators with a Gender and Race Vision. [Panorama de la actuación de las mujeres en el periodismo brasileño y caminos para la construcción de una comunicación en la perspectiva de género](#). November 7, 2020.

<sup>12</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 11.



11. In Colombia, according to data collected in 2020, 62% of women journalists consider that they receive worse treatment than that received by their male colleagues. Only 35% consider that they are treated the same and 3% believe that they receive better treatment.<sup>13</sup>
12. In Costa Rica, 92% of women journalists allege that there is gender-based discrimination in decisions related to job promotion.<sup>14</sup> In addition, 31% state that they have been discriminated against at some point.<sup>15</sup>
13. These patterns of discrimination limit women's access to the media, restrict the type of tasks and/or topics they are allowed to address, and demonstrate that decisions about women's access to job opportunities, promotions, and/or or salary increases are not based on objective criteria but reflect and perpetuate gender stereotypes towards them.<sup>16</sup>

### ***a) Underrepresentation of Women in the Media of the Region***

14. Gender-based discrimination has a significant impact on women's access to the media. In 2015, 43% of people presenting or reporting news in Latin America were women. In the Caribbean, this representation reached 45%.<sup>17</sup> The most recent studies on the matter show that this trend continues in many States of the region, although some progress has been made.
15. According to 2019 reports, in Argentina, despite the fact that they are the majority among those who study communication and/or journalism,<sup>18</sup> women represent 30% of the people who work in journalistic companies.<sup>19</sup> Similar figures are recorded in Colombia: only 3 out of 10 journalists are women.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Campaign “No Es Hora De Callar” and Observatory of Democracy of the University of Los Andes. [Violencia en contra de las mujeres periodistas en Colombia](#). November 11, 2020. Page 22.

<sup>14</sup> Noguera Calderón, Yanancy. [Estatus de mujeres periodistas en medios de comunicación en Costa Rica](#). 2015. Page 39.

<sup>15</sup> Noguera Calderón, Yanancy. [Estatus de mujeres periodistas en medios de comunicación en Costa Rica](#). 2015. Page 39.

<sup>16</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 11.

<sup>17</sup> GMMP. [Desigualdad de género en las noticias 1995-2015. Principales Hallazgos](#). No date.

<sup>18</sup> World Association for Christian Communication- WACC, ALC Communication, FUNDEPS, Communication for Equality. [Informe Nacional Argentina](#). 2019. Page 3.

<sup>19</sup> World Association for Christian Communication- WACC, ALC Communication, FUNDEPS, Communication for Equality. [Informe Nacional Argentina](#). 2019. Page 1.

<sup>20</sup> Sentiido Foundation and Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision. [Implementación del Cap. I de la Plataforma de Beijing: mujeres, medios y comunicación en](#)

16. In Brazil, in a survey carried out in 2018 on a total universe of 26,000 journalists, "the predominance of men was observed, totaling 58.2%, while women represent only 41.8% of all professionals"<sup>21</sup> in the media. However, there are significant differences between the different types of media: while the percentage of women working in television media is almost similar to the number of men, in radio and print media, woman journalists are three times less than their male peers.<sup>22</sup>
17. In this framework, it has been noted that, in Brazil, "the journalistic market has changed significantly in recent decades, with the proportion of men and women in newsrooms becoming numerically more balanced. However, salary and occupational inequalities are still recorded."<sup>23</sup> Similarly, in El Salvador, "[there is] an increase in the participation of women in the media, especially in reporting, in the technical area of photography, cameras, which was not seen five years ago, but it does not mean that women have the same conditions as men."<sup>24</sup>
18. The low representation of women is largely associated with the gender stereotypes that permeate the hiring decisions of numerous media outlets in the region. In Ecuador, journalists report that, on numerous occasions, the decision to hire or not hire a journalist is associated with an evaluation of "their way of dressing, marital status, reproductive plans, sexual orientation, and nationality"<sup>25</sup> and/or an evaluation of their sexual and reproductive life.<sup>26</sup> In El Salvador, women communicators point out that "beliefs [about] women being sensitive is a criterion they take into consideration when hiring in the media [and] being a pretty person [is a criterion considered relevant] more than anything in the television media."<sup>27</sup> In the same way, they indicate that "more is demanded of them if a task is delegated to [them].... We become more demanding of ourselves to

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[Colombia 2020](#). 2020. Information based on data from the Press Freedom Foundation, Information Cartographies, 2019.

21 Brazilian Network of Journalists and Communicators with a Gender and Race Vision. [Panorama de la actuación de las mujeres en el periodismo brasileño y caminos para la construcción de una comunicación en la perspectiva de género](#). November 7, 2020.

22 Apex Strategic Content and Communication. [Perfil do jornalista brasileiro](#). 2018. Page 6.

23 Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 11.

24 GAMAG. [Perspectiva de género en medios de comunicación salvadoreños](#). No date. Page 4

25 Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 26.

26 Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 26.

27 GAMAG. [Perspectiva de género en medios de comunicación salvadoreños](#). No date. Page 5.

show that we are capable, because those in high positions do not believe that we are”.<sup>28</sup>

19. As described below, when they manage to overcome these barriers and gain access to the media, women journalists and media workers must face practices of horizontal and vertical segregation, salary inequalities, a high level of job insecurity, and other forms of intersectional discrimination.

## **b) Horizontal Segregation**

20. Occupational segregation is a widespread phenomenon in the labor market throughout the world. It is manifested through patterns of division of tasks by virtue of which women and men are "concentrated in different types and at different levels of activity and employment"<sup>29</sup> that are assigned to them by virtue of gender prejudices and/or stereotypes"<sup>30</sup>. This segregation is "horizontal" when women are overrepresented in certain types of occupations and/or when "women and men are distributed differently between branches of economic activity and occupations at the same level" based on gender. This segregation constitutes a form of gender-based discrimination and results in "differences in power, qualifications, income and opportunities"<sup>31</sup> in the workplace.
21. The findings of the Global Media Monitoring Project developed in 2020 reveal that worldwide "the last five years have seen small incremental shifts towards parity in topics and sources, particularly in radio news, at the same time, the pace of change is so slow that one could speak of a stagnation."<sup>32</sup> According to the same report, "there has been significant progress towards balancing stories reported by women and men on television; currently 48% of televised news is reported by women."<sup>33</sup>
22. At the regional level, women journalists and media workers are also exposed to this form of discrimination. In most of the countries of the region, women journalists "are responsible for the 'less relevant' issues for the media agenda and those linked to what is considered the 'feminine'

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<sup>28</sup> GAMAG. [Perspectiva de género en medios de comunicación salvadoreños](#). No date. Page 5.

<sup>29</sup> ILO. [ABC de los derechos de las trabajadoras y la igualdad de género](#). Second Edition. 2008. Page 158.

<sup>30</sup> ILO and UNDP. [La segregación horizontal de género en los mercados laborales de ocho países de América Latina: implicancias para las desigualdades de género](#). 2019. Page 6.

<sup>31</sup> ILO. [ABC de los derechos de las trabajadoras y la igualdad de género](#). Second Edition. 2008. Page 158.

<sup>32</sup> Global Media Monitoring Project, [¿Qué avances hay para la igualdad de género en las noticias 25 años después de Beijing?](#), March 3, 2021. Pg. 1

<sup>33</sup> Global Media Monitoring Project, [¿Qué avances hay para la igualdad de género en las noticias 25 años después de Beijing?](#), March 3, 2021. Pg. 1

- issue: culture, society, health, education, etc. that is, work areas that would be extensions of the reproductive tasks that women have traditionally performed without pay in society. And, also, obviously, they are the ones who carry the 'gender agenda'."<sup>34</sup>
23. In Argentina, men are in charge of covering topics related to politics, economics, energy and sports. On the contrary, women are assigned topics considered "soft" such as society, shows, and general information.<sup>35</sup>
  24. In Brazil, women are the majority among those who cover economics. However, they are still a minority among those who cover sports, technology, and education.<sup>36</sup> At the same time, they are overrepresented in coverage of tourism, fashion, food, and lifestyle issues. In this framework, Brazilian journalists conclude that topics are often assigned based on gender stereotypes.<sup>37</sup>
  25. In Colombia, only 2 out of 10 women journalists cover all the issues on the media's agenda or are in charge of sections such as politics and justice. As in other countries in the region, the majority of women journalists are pigeonholed in social, cultural, and publicity topics considered as 'soft'.<sup>38</sup> Those women who challenge these patterns of horizontal segregation and seek access to cover politics, justice, corruption, armed conflict, sports, among other topics, face a greater risk of experiencing situations of gender-based violence, while also experiencing attitudes and practices linked to "the sexualization of their body,... the underestimation of their intellectual capacity, [the questioning] of their intimate life and [other actions that seek] to subdue them emotionality."<sup>39</sup>
  26. In Ecuador, although progress has been made in recent years, "politics is reserved for men; women journalists who have expressed their desire to cover these issues are relegated to covering environmental, social, or

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<sup>34</sup> Chaher, Sandra; Pedraza, Virginia (Coord.). [Organizaciones de medios y género : igualdad de oportunidades para mujeres y personas LGTTBIO+ en empresas, sindicatos y universidades](#). FUNDEPS and Civil Partnership Communication for Equality. 2018. Page 60.

<sup>35</sup> World Association for Christian Communication- WACC, ALC Communication, FUNDEPS, Communication for Equality. [Informe Nacional Argentina](#). 2019. Page 1.

<sup>36</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 9.

<sup>37</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 23.

<sup>38</sup> Foundation for the Freedom of the Press. [Paz en los titulares, miedo en la redacción. Informe sobre el estado de la libertad de prensa en Colombia en 2015](#). February 8, 2016. Page 78.

<sup>39</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 23.

- entertainment issues.”<sup>40</sup> Similarly, in El Salvador, “[there is] a certain stigmatization of women in some media and it is thought that they cannot cover some issues such as acts of violence, because they are supposed to be vulnerable.”<sup>41</sup> In said country, “[the] number of women as sports news anchors has increased, but as long as they meet the stereotype of a pretty young woman; there are few spaces for analysts or presenters in opinion slots and interviews.”<sup>42</sup>
27. Women journalists also face difficulties in covering issues related to gender equality and women's rights. In this sense, in Ecuador, journalists point out that, when they try to address these issues or modify the coverage that their media carries out in cases of gender-based violence, they face “a dynamic of permanent struggle, and an added work of pedagogy towards their colleagues and companions, editors, and bosses. Although there are times when it is possible to convince editors and colleagues, in others it is not achieved, generating an overexertion, an increase in work pressure, frustration, mental health problems, or the desertion of their workspaces.”<sup>43</sup>
28. In Colombia, the Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and the Karisma Foundation have emphasized that “the freedom of expression of people who practice journalism is attacked when they are prevented from covering and talking about issues such as sexual and reproductive rights or the claims of people of diverse gender identity and sexual orientation. These questions, in the XXI century, seem to be taboo in many journalistic media and forbidden topics for public conversation. This situation also affects society, which is prevented from receiving information that allows a better understanding of these issues coming from journalism.”<sup>44</sup>
29. In relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, the preliminary findings of the Global Media Monitoring Project show that women journalists in the region are overrepresented in coverage of issues associated with this phenomenon in digital media. Explaining the reasons behind this overrepresentation, the study notes that “non-COVID-19 stories are more likely to challenge gender stereotypes than pandemic-related stories.”<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Cerosestenta. [8M: Esto es ser periodista y mujer en Latinoamérica](#). September 6, 2018.

<sup>41</sup> GAMAG. [Perspectiva de género en medios de comunicación salvadoreños](#). No date. Page 4.

<sup>42</sup> GAMAG. [Perspectiva de género en medios de comunicación salvadoreños](#). No date. Page 4.

<sup>43</sup> GAMAG. [Situación de las mujeres en los medios de comunicación y en las TICs](#). September 2019. Page 2.

<sup>44</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 20.

<sup>45</sup> Global Media Monitoring Project, [¿Qué avances hay para la igualdad de género en las noticias 25 años después de Beijing?](#), March 3, 2021. Page 8.

### c) *Wage Gap and Job Insecurity*

30. As the report “Women journalists and freedom of expression” of the Office of the Special Rapporteur points out, the patterns of distribution of work within the media outlets outlined above can contribute to making the work of women journalists less visible and less valued, which can translate into a salary gap with respect to their male colleagues and access to fewer contractual protections. The most recent studies on the working conditions of journalists confirm this pattern.
31. Regarding the salary gap, in Argentina, a survey carried out in 2018 on a sample of 405 women journalists found that 77% of them consider that they do not receive the same remuneration as their male colleagues for the same work.<sup>46</sup> In Chile, in 2019, journalists reported that women earn “30% less than men, a situation that is reproduced in the media where salaries are negotiated personally.”<sup>47</sup>
32. In Ecuador, a report released in 2020 revealed that “there is a salary gap between women—who earn \$938.44— and men—who receive \$1,378.87.”<sup>48</sup> This situation has a differentiated effect on those who are just starting out in the profession.<sup>49</sup>
33. Similarly, in Brazil, women journalists report that “white women have lower salaries than male and white colleagues, however more than black women journalists, as they are the ones with the worst remuneration. In this way, the data indicates that journalism needs to face both gender inequalities and those of ethnic-racial origin.”<sup>50</sup> In said country, salary inequalities are usually associated with a low appreciation of the work of women journalists and the stereotype that, due to their gender, they are not the breadwinner of their household therefore, they do not need as high a salary as their male peers.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Argentine Journalism Forum. [Mujeres periodistas en la Argentina. Situación laboral y rol profesional de las comunicadoras en el país.](#) November 2018. Page 21.

<sup>47</sup> Women in the media. [Este 8M periodistas feministas nos sumamos a la huelga.](#) March 8, 2019.

<sup>48</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador.](#) November 2020. Page 21. Based on data from the Ecuadorian Institute of Social Security corresponding to May 2020.

<sup>49</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador.](#) November 2020. Page 21.

<sup>50</sup> Brazilian Network of Journalists and Communicators with a Gender and Race Vision. [Panorama de la actuación de las mujeres en el periodismo brasileño y caminos para la construcción de una comunicación en la perspectiva de género.](#) November 7, 2020.

<sup>51</sup> Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. [Mujeres y liderazgo en los medios informativos en 2020: evidencias de 10 mercados.](#) March 8, 2020.

34. In El Salvador, women journalists consider that “[there is] a lot of inequality in the workload.”<sup>52</sup> This determines that, in some cases, the media “pay women more, but the work is greater, there is no work compensation with salary.”<sup>53</sup> In Colombia and Mexico, women journalists also report the existence of a gender pay gap.<sup>54</sup>
35. In relation to job insecurity, the available data indicates that, in Argentina, women are overrepresented among those who work part-time in media companies. On the contrary, “men are the majority among those who work in a dependency relationship and with a full-time workload.”<sup>55</sup> In this context, women who work in the media consider that “[these] inequalities exacerbate problems such as the wage gap and add to unpaid domestic work as a pillar of gender inequality.”<sup>56</sup>
36. In Chile, journalists have denounced that “many women for years [have] worked with fee contracts, without the possibility of having social security or health rights.”<sup>57</sup> In particular, they demand “greater social protection for independent work and the elimination of outsourcing of [their] tasks, since those practices promote job instability.”<sup>58</sup>
37. In El Salvador, women journalists report “a growing job insecurity, due to several factors: now one person carries all the coverage, including multimedia, taking photos, uploading them to social networks, and for radio, which contributes to job insecurity. In some media it is done due to financial difficulties, but in others it is not.”<sup>59</sup> In this sense, they report that

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52 GAMAG. [Perspectiva de género en medios de comunicación salvadoreños](#). No date. Page 5.

53 GAMAG. [Perspectiva de género en medios de comunicación salvadoreños](#). No date. Page 5.

54 Foundation for the Freedom of the Press. [Silencioff, ¿las regiones tomarán la palabra?. Informe sobre la situación para la Libertad de Prensa en Colombia en 2016](#). 2017. P. 113. P. 9. IACHR/OHCHR. [Special Report on the Situation of Freedom of Expression in Mexico. Joint Report of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression of IACHR, Edison Lanza, and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of the right to freedom of opinion and expression, David Kaye, on their mission to Mexico](#). June 2018. Para. 28.

55 World Association for Christian Communication- WACC, ALC Communication, FUNDEPS, Communication for Equality. [Informe Nacional Argentina](#). 2019. Page 1.

56 SiPreBA. [Relevamiento de situación laboral en los medios de CABA durante 2018-2019](#). June 10, 2019.

57 Women in the media. [Este 8M periodistas feministas nos sumamos a la huelga](#). March 8, 2019.

57 World Association for Christian Communication- WACC, ALC Communication, FUNDEPS, Communication for Equality. [Informe Nacional Argentina](#). 2019. Page 1.

58 Women in the media. [Este 8M periodistas feministas nos sumamos a la huelga](#). March 8, 2019.

58 World Association for Christian Communication- WACC, ALC Communication, FUNDEPS, Communication for Equality. [Informe Nacional Argentina](#). 2019. Page 1.

59 GAMAG. [Perspectiva de género en medios de comunicación salvadoreños](#). No date. Page 5.

many times the media "take advantage of the supposed economic cuts to fire all women."<sup>60</sup>

38. In Mexico, women journalists and media workers also face a high level of economic instability in the exercise of the profession. Many of them declare that the income they receive for their journalistic work is not enough to cover their cost of living, which forces them to have other parallel jobs. This multiplicity of jobs, to which unpaid domestic work is added, generates an overload of tasks that impacts not only the exercise of their profession but also their health and other aspects of their personal life.<sup>61</sup>

#### **d) Glass Ceiling**

39. The term "glass ceiling" refers to obstacles based on gender bias that prevent or hinder women from accessing senior decision-making and/or management positions in companies.<sup>62</sup> These obstacles represent a form of discrimination against women in the workplace<sup>63</sup> that also affects women journalists and media workers.
40. Based on statistics that demonstrate the "feminization of poverty", the persistence of the "glass ceiling" in the exercise of journalism and the media is one of the consequences of the reproduction of the cycle of multidimensional poverty that has a differential impact on women and their ESCER. Women continue to be overrepresented in school dropout and illiteracy rates; and in turn, the precariousness of their labor rights in the region continues. This context makes it possible to make visible the multiple obstacles that women face in accessing workspaces related to journalism and the media.
41. Similarly, the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression considers that since journalism is a work par excellence, exposed to the public, its practices and improvement processes have the potential to impact other dimensions of community life. In this sense, overcoming the different obstacles in the media can be a catalyst so that other social dynamics where these obstacles also exist can be encouraged to transform and guarantee women's rights.
42. Throughout the region, the presence of women both in hierarchical positions within newsrooms and in government and senior management

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<sup>60</sup> GAMAG. [Perspectiva de género en medios de comunicación salvadoreños](#). No date. Page 5.

<sup>61</sup> The Coalition for Women in Journalism. [CFWJ Annual Report 2020](#). December 23, 2020.

<sup>62</sup> ILO. [ABC de los derechos de las trabajadoras y la igualdad de género](#). Second edition. 2008. Page 173.

<sup>63</sup> ILO. [ABC de los derechos de las trabajadoras y la igualdad de género](#). Second edition. 2008. Page 173.



- positions in news companies is scarce.<sup>64</sup> In 2016, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) reported that the representation of women in management positions in media companies in Latin America was less than 25%.<sup>65</sup> The data surveyed in recent years suggest that this trend has not changed significantly.
43. In Argentina, 78% of the more than 400 journalists who participated in a study carried out in 2018 reported that the majority of the bosses in the medium where they work were men.<sup>66</sup> Similarly, "only 12% of those surveyed hold a decision-making position (direction, management, or leadership) within journalistic organizations."<sup>67</sup> In relation to the possibilities of promotion, only a third of them "think that they have possibilities for growth in their current job"<sup>68</sup> and 72% consider that "they have less opportunity for growth than men"<sup>69</sup> in the media companies in which they work. Along the same lines, 55% of the women who were part of the study stated that companies "always prefer men when there are opportunities for promotion."<sup>70</sup>
44. Regarding ownership positions of journalistic companies, "only 22% of media companies are run by women."<sup>71</sup> According to a report released in 2019, "women become owners of media companies in three situations: by family ties, creating their own small (digital) companies or as part of civil associations."<sup>72</sup>

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64 International Women's Media Foundation. [Global Report on the Status of Women in the News Media](#). In English. Page 9.

65 International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). [Radiografía De Género: Día Internacional De La Mujer 2016](#). March 8, 2016.

66 Argentine Journalism Forum. [Mujeres periodistas en la Argentina. Situación laboral y rol profesional de las comunicadoras en el país](#). November 2018. Page 23.

67 Argentine Journalism Forum. [Mujeres periodistas en la Argentina. Situación laboral y rol profesional de las comunicadoras en el país](#). November 2018. Page 23.

68 Argentine Journalism Forum. [Mujeres periodistas en la Argentina. Situación laboral y rol profesional de las comunicadoras en el país](#). November 2018. Page 34.

69 Argentine Journalism Forum. [Mujeres periodistas en la Argentina. Situación laboral y rol profesional de las comunicadoras en el país](#). November 2018. Page 21.

70 Argentine Journalism Forum. [Mujeres periodistas en la Argentina. Situación laboral y rol profesional de las comunicadoras en el país](#). November 2018. Page 24.

71 World Association for Christian Communication- WACC, ALC Communication, FUNDEPS, Communication for Equality. [Informe Nacional Argentina](#). 2019. Page 1.

72 World Association for Christian Communication- WACC, ALC Communication, FUNDEPS, Communication for Equality. [Informe Nacional Argentina](#). 2019. Page 1.

45. In Brazil, although women are the majority among those who practice journalism,<sup>73</sup> they represent only 22% of the people who lead newsrooms.<sup>74</sup> In this context, women journalists perceive that men are overrepresented in leadership positions, such as editors, coordinators, and directors, and that it is more difficult for them to achieve a promotion.<sup>75</sup>
46. In Chile, according to information released in 2019, "there is only one woman who holds the position of media director, while the positions of editors continue to be mainly male dominated spaces."<sup>76</sup> In the same country, it has been pointed out that "women are reporters, producers, the people who manage everything, who manage interviews, who manage operational issues".<sup>77</sup> However, it is usually a man "who makes the decisions about how a story is approached, what is going to be in the headline, what is going to be on the news."<sup>78</sup>
47. In Colombia, women "[have] an increasing presence in newsrooms and even in managerial positions",<sup>79</sup> to the point that in 9 of 26 media outlets surveyed in a 2017 report the directors were women.<sup>80</sup> However, women continue to occupy a very marginal role in media ownership. There are even media that do not have any women among their owners or shareholders.<sup>81</sup> At the regional level, in 2020, six women directed the most important regional newspapers in the country, a record number in Colombia.<sup>82</sup>
48. According to a 2020 report, in Ecuador, male journalists occupy "the majority of positions related to the areas of writing, production, and

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<sup>73</sup> Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. [Mujeres y liderazgo en los medios informativos en 2020: evidencias de 10 mercados](#). March 8, 2020.

<sup>74</sup> Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. [Mujeres y liderazgo en los medios informativos en 2020: evidencias de 10 mercados](#). March 8, 2020.

<sup>75</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 9 et seq.

<sup>76</sup> Women in the media. [Este 8M periodistas feministas nos sumamos a la huelga](#). March 8, 2019.

<sup>77</sup> University of Chile. [Periodistas reflexionaron sobre el rol de los medios de comunicación en la perpetuación de la violencia contra las mujeres](#). November 29, 2018.

<sup>78</sup> University of Chile. [Periodistas reflexionaron sobre el rol de los medios de comunicación en la perpetuación de la violencia contra las mujeres](#). November 29, 2018.

<sup>79</sup> The Empty Chair. [Los 410 dueños de los principales medios \(incluyendo los de paraísos fiscales\)](#). October 30, 2017.

<sup>80</sup> The Empty Chair. [Los 410 dueños de los principales medios \(incluyendo los de paraísos fiscales\)](#). October 30, 2017.

<sup>81</sup> The Empty Chair. [Los 410 dueños de los principales medios \(incluyendo los de paraísos fiscales\)](#). October 30, 2017.

<sup>82</sup> Semana. [El poder femenino: las mujeres que dirigen los diarios regionales más importantes del país](#). February 14, 2020.

- design”<sup>83</sup> and are also overrepresented in hierarchical or management positions. That same year, a survey carried out by the Communication Council of Ecuador revealed that “of eleven programs broadcasted on seven national television media, the total number of people who participate daily through an important role within them, are mostly of the male gender (25) compared to the female gender (13). According to the weighting of data, for every 100 people who participate daily in some important role in the media, 66 are men and 34 are women.”<sup>84</sup> The same entity has identified that “the production of content from women has currently decreased, if the reality of women in the monitored media is compared with the exposed situation of this population group in 2017.”<sup>85</sup>
49. In this context, women journalists in Ecuador denounce that they are “undervalued” and/or discriminated against on the basis of their gender by media companies when making decisions about promotions and that in order to compete for hierarchical positions, more demanding and/or different requirements are imposed on them because of their gender. In particular, on many occasions, “a woman is expected to conform to certain characteristics such as being ‘nice, soft, conciliatory, not having any pretensions and not being able to confront or argue aggressively. If a woman does not meet these characteristics, she is considered a difficult person who is ‘not fit for this type of work’.”<sup>86</sup> They are also questioned about their reproductive plans when making decisions related to promotions.<sup>87</sup>
50. Once they gain access to these positions, they face resistance from employees under them, especially men, who distrust their ability to perform in the position. In this framework, only 15% of Ecuadorian women journalists aspire to ascend to a leadership position in the medium where they currently work, while 33% aspire to be independent.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 27.

<sup>84</sup> Council for the Regulation, Development, and Promotion of Information and Communication of Ecuador. [Herramientas Guías para el Tratamiento Periodístico y Comunicacional en Materia de Género](#). September 30, 2020. Page 11.

<sup>85</sup> Council for the Regulation, Development, and Promotion of Information and Communication of Ecuador. [Herramientas Guías para el Tratamiento Periodístico y Comunicacional en Materia de Género](#). September 30, 2020. Page 11.

<sup>86</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 28.

<sup>87</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 34.

<sup>88</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 31.

51. A similar pattern is reported by women journalists in Nicaragua. According to the testimony of a journalist, “when [the] small number of women in the media reach positions of power as producers or editors -positions where there are not many women-, no matter how many merits we have, we are accused of sleeping with the boss to get the position or our authority is not respected.”<sup>89</sup>
52. For its part, in Mexico, on a sample of 392 journalists and media workers surveyed in a study carried out in 2019, 47% indicated that they did not have or had had staff under their charge.<sup>90</sup> Likewise, of a total of 22 print or digital media surveyed in 2020, only 4 had gender parity or a majority of women in “management or coordination positions”. In two of them, there were no women hired in these positions. In addition, of a total of 280 hierarchical positions relieved, only 22% were held by women.<sup>91</sup>
53. In Venezuela, the majority of people who occupy leadership roles or hierarchical positions within the media are men. On the other hand, “the bulk of reporting is done mainly by young women.”<sup>92</sup> At the same time, it has been pointed out that “there is greater gender parity in the heads of digital media and the greatest inequality is found in radio, with an appreciable predominance of men.”<sup>93</sup>
54. Recent research has identified that, given this scenario, women journalists in the region are developing their own digital media, taking advantage of the low entry barriers that these media present, and as a strategy to overcome the glass ceilings that characterize the traditional media.<sup>94</sup> In this sense, a study carried out in 2017 found that women had been involved in the creation of 62% of the 100 native digital media surveyed in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico. Of the total number of founders, 40% were women.<sup>95</sup> According to the same study, “[women] are also playing a

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<sup>89</sup> Cerosestenta. [8M: Esto es ser periodista y mujer en Latinoamérica](#). September 6, 2018.

<sup>90</sup> United Mexican Journalists Collective. [AcosoDATA. Sondeo sobre acoso, hostigamiento y violencia sexual contra las mujeres que trabajan en medios periodísticos en México](#). March 2019. Page 10.

<sup>91</sup> United Mexican Journalists Collective. [¿Es tiempo de cambio? La disparidad de género en medios](#). March 12, 2020.

<sup>92</sup> Center for citizen information and Konrad-Adenauer Foundation. [Los periodismos de Latinoamérica: identidades en las diferencias](#). 2016. Page 126.

<sup>93</sup> Center for citizen information and Konrad-Adenauer Foundation. [Los periodismos de Latinoamérica: identidades en las diferencias](#). 2016. Page 126.

<sup>94</sup> SembraMedia. [Punto de Inflexión. Impacto, amenazas y sustentabilidad: estudio de emprendedores de medios digitales latinoamericanos](#). 2017. Page 41.

<sup>95</sup> SembraMedia. [Punto de Inflexión. Impacto, amenazas y sustentabilidad: estudio de emprendedores de medios digitales latinoamericanos](#). 2017. Page 41.

significant role in the executive and management teams of these native digital media.”<sup>96</sup>

### ***e) Gender-Based Discrimination against Journalists with Caregiving Roles***

55. Due to entrenched patterns of gender-based division of labor,<sup>97</sup> “women spend a greater proportion and amount of time on caregiving tasks, even when they are engaged in the labor market.”<sup>98</sup> This leads to “many of them being excluded from the labor market or being inserted in part-time jobs or work that does not imply attending a fixed place of work, as a way to reconcile family responsibilities with the obligations of paid work.”<sup>99</sup>
56. Along the same lines, as described by the Office of the Special Rapporteur in its report “Women journalists and freedom of expression”, women journalists and media workers in the region are affected by “the lack of flexibility of the working hours, the limited or complete lack of access to quality and affordable childcare, poor maternity and paternity leave policies, and social attitudes [whereby women are assigned unpaid caregiving jobs], among many other factors.”<sup>100</sup> To this is added the culture of long working hours typical of many media outlets.<sup>101</sup>In this context, the

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<sup>96</sup> Sembramedia. [Punto de Inflexión. Impacto, amenazas y sustentabilidad: estudio de emprendedores de medios digitales latinoamericanos](#). 2017. Page 41.

These patterns are not always replicated in digital versions of traditional media. For example, in Ecuador, journalists denounce that “many media continue to try to make the transition to the digital world from a “savings” perspective. In this framework, there have been situations in which the media reduce their staff and concentrate the tasks in a very small group of journalists, which generates an excessive increase in the workload and other impacts in terms of job insecurity. Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 22.

<sup>97</sup> Luis Casanova y Carina Lupica (ILO). Care and labor market: opportunities and challenges of employment policies to generate and promote decent work. In ILO, UNICEF, UNDP, CIPPEC. [Las políticas de cuidado en Argentina: avances y desafíos](#). 2018. Page 80.

<sup>98</sup> Luis Casanova y Carina Lupica (ILO). Care and labor market: opportunities and challenges of employment policies to generate and promote decent work. In ILO, UNICEF, UNDP, CIPPEC. [Las políticas de cuidado en Argentina: avances y desafíos](#). 2018. Page 80.

<sup>99</sup> Luis Casanova y Carina Lupica (ILO). Care and labor market: opportunities and challenges of employment policies to generate and promote decent work. In ILO, UNICEF, UNDP, CIPPEC. [Las políticas de cuidado en Argentina: avances y desafíos](#). 2018. Page 80.

<sup>100</sup> UN Women. Occupational Segregation. No date. Available for consultation at:<http://interactive.unwomen.org/multimedia/infographic/changingworldofwork/es/index.html>

<sup>101</sup> UNESCO. [Indicadores de Género para Medios de Comunicación](#). 2012; Indicators World Association for Christian Communication - WACC. [El Proyecto de Monitoreo Global de Medios. ¿Quién figura en las noticias?](#) 2015. Page 49; International Federation of Journalists (IFJ). [Radiografía De Género: Día Internacional De La Mujer 2016](#). March 8, 2016.

- available information indicates that, in a large part of the countries of the region, it is still “very difficult for women journalists to achieve a balance between home and work in the newsrooms”,<sup>102</sup> which has a significant impact in their professional career and/or in their job opportunities.
57. In Argentina, 6 out of 10 female journalists consider that one of the main challenges they face in their professional lives, differently from their male peers, is “combining family life with professional development.”<sup>103</sup> 34% indicate that in their work there are no options to balance their work with their personal life.<sup>104</sup> The women who report that these options exist indicate that they have flexible work schedules, the possibility of working remotely and/or a reduced working day.<sup>105</sup>
58. However, it must be taken into account that, in most cases, “work-family reconciliation policies are fundamentally focused on women, thus reinforcing their ascription to the responsibility of reproductive tasks.”<sup>106</sup> In this sense, it is noted that “company policies make women responsible for caregiving tasks through the creation of specific programs to facilitate childrearing by women and limitations for men to make use of the right, for example, to child care centers.”<sup>107</sup> In addition, 3 out of 10 Argentine women journalists report discriminatory practices for “having children.”<sup>108</sup>
59. In Brazil, women journalists also report difficulties reconciling family life with work responsibilities, due to the way work is organized and long working hours.<sup>109</sup> These difficulties have been aggravated in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>110</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> World Association for Christian Communication – WACC. [El Proyecto de Monitoreo Global de Medios. ¿Quién figura en las noticias?](#) 2015. Page 49.

<sup>103</sup> Argentine Journalism Forum. [Mujeres periodistas en la Argentina. Situación laboral y rol profesional de las comunicadoras en el país.](#) November 2018. Page 29.

<sup>104</sup> Argentine Journalism Forum. [Mujeres periodistas en la Argentina. Situación laboral y rol profesional de las comunicadoras en el país.](#) November 2018. Page 29.

<sup>105</sup> Argentine Journalism Forum. [Mujeres periodistas en la Argentina. Situación laboral y rol profesional de las comunicadoras en el país.](#) November 2018. Page 29.

<sup>106</sup> Chaheer, Sandra; Pedraza, Virginia (Coord.). [Organizaciones de medios y género : igualdad de oportunidades para mujeres y personas LGTTBIO+ en empresas, sindicatos y universidades.](#) FUNDEPS and Communication Civil Association for Equality. 2018. Page 62.

<sup>107</sup> World Association for Christian Communication- WACC, ALC Communication, FUNDEPS, Communication for Equality. [Informe Nacional Argentina.](#) 2019. Page 1.

<sup>108</sup> Argentine Journalism Forum. [Mujeres periodistas en la Argentina. Situación laboral y rol profesional de las comunicadoras en el país.](#) November 2018. Page 29.

<sup>109</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro.](#) 2017. Page 13.

<sup>110</sup> National Commission of Women of the National Federation of Journalists. [Mães jornalistas e o contexto da pandemia.](#) August 26, 2020

60. In addition, they report being harassed so that they do not get pregnant and/or do not take maternity leave.<sup>111</sup> In particular, during the hiring processes they are consulted about their reproductive plans.<sup>112</sup>
61. In Ecuador, “women journalists comment on their difficulties in keeping their jobs in the media when they are mothers. They are considered less productive, and a hostile environment is created that prevents them from continuing in their jobs.”<sup>113</sup> In this sense, a study carried out in 2020 indicates that “[in] the media there are no clear policies for women who want to be or who are mothers. Women still have to choose between work and their family.”<sup>114</sup> A few outlets offer the option of telecommuting for women journalists who are mothers. However, “[the] reduced working day is not an option and the media do not have childcare spaces either.”<sup>115</sup>
62. These data show that “the traditional assignment of reproductive work to women”<sup>116</sup> means that women journalists and media workers are forced to “organize their daily lives between paid work and caregiving tasks, which conditions both access and the possibilities of employment choice, and with it their autonomy.”<sup>117</sup> The absence of regulatory frameworks and adequate public policies regarding caregiving tasks and other forms of unpaid domestic work contribute to perpetuate this situation.
63. In this sense, in Chile, women journalists consider that “as long as they do not share equal conditions of domestic work, then it will be more difficult for a female reporter to accept a travel mission, for a female driver to go abroad it will also be more difficult. It will be more difficult for a female boss to accept being on a board of directors, and that is how it will be in the media, in companies and everywhere. As long as that doesn't change, as long as there isn't a mandatory male postnatal leave, then it's going to

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<sup>111</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 12.

<sup>112</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 12.

<sup>113</sup> GAMAG. [Situación de las mujeres en los medios de comunicación y en las TICS](#). September 2019. Page 2

<sup>114</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 34.

<sup>115</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 34.

<sup>116</sup> Pedraza, Virginia. Women in the workplace of the media. In [Argentina: medios de comunicación y género ¿hemos cumplido con la plataforma de acción de Beijing?](#). Compiled by Chaher, Sandra. Communication for Equality Editions. 2018. Page 62.

<sup>117</sup> Pedraza, Virginia. Women in the workplace of the media. In [Argentina: medios de comunicación y género ¿hemos cumplido con la plataforma de acción de Beijing?](#). Compiled by Chaher, Sandra. Communication for Equality Editions. 2018. Page 62.

happen that the culture in the media will continue to be the same.”<sup>118</sup> Along the same lines, in Colombia, women journalists point out that “they have had to find a balance between their work and private lives to stand out in a profession that often requires sacrificing personal and family time. ‘Society still expects us to be in charge of household responsibilities and that always creates tension with work’.”<sup>119</sup>

### **f) Patterns of Intersectional Discrimination**

64. As the Office of the Special Rapporteur has pointed out, “the intersection of multiple identities may increase the risk of certain women facing obstacles or difficulties in the full exercise of the right to freedom of expression or may generate a differentiated effect on certain groups of women. Many times, these factors also translate into particular forms of discrimination against those who make up these groups.”<sup>120</sup>
65. The Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression observes that events of gender-based discrimination in the media can be aggravated by the intersection of other factors such as age, ethnic-racial origin, sexual orientation, expression of gender, national origin, disability, or any other belonging or identity to a population group historically discriminated against.
66. Due to the prevalence of intersecting patterns of discrimination, in several countries of the region, Afro-descendant journalists tend to be disproportionately underrepresented in traditional media outlets and in decision-making positions in these media. In this regard, the Inter-American Commission has previously referred to the obstacles faced by women of African descent in accessing jobs in satisfactory conditions due to the persistence of patterns of racial discrimination and stereotypes based on ethnic-racial origin.<sup>121122</sup>
67. In this sense, in Colombia, discrimination against women journalists “is accentuated for Afro-Colombian and indigenous women due to the

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<sup>118</sup> University of Chile. [Periodistas reflexionaron sobre el rol de los medios de comunicación en la perpetuación de la violencia contra las mujeres](#). November 29, 2018.

<sup>119</sup> Semana. [El poder femenino: las mujeres que dirigen los diarios regionales más importantes del país](#). February 14, 2020.

<sup>120</sup> IACHR. [Women Journalists and Freedom of Expression: Discrimination and gender-based faced by women journalists in the exercise of their profession](#). OEA/SER.L/V/II IACHR/RELE/INF.20/18. 2018. Para. 12.

<sup>121</sup> Information received in the framework of the consultation meeting with experts held by the Office of the Special Rapporteur on February 20, 2018, in Bogotá.

<sup>122</sup> IACHR, [Economic, Social, Cultural and Environmental Rights of Persons of African Descent](#), OEA/Ser.L/V/II., March 16, 2021, p. 54 et seq.



persistence of structural barriers to access to the media and negative stereotypes and prejudices towards them.”<sup>123</sup> As reported by the women journalists and communicators who participated in an investigation carried out by the Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and the Karisma Foundation in 2020, “being a woman already poses some challenges for us, but being a black woman in the exercise of journalism supposes other additional challenges. It is not contemplated to dignify the role of black or indigenous men and women through the exercise of journalism.”<sup>124</sup> In particular, they pointed out that they usually “are called as presenters, either due to positive discrimination or so that there is greater diversity in the audiovisual media or as a way to increase television audiences with an exotic and attractive image, with an undeclared intention of objectifying and sexualizing their bodies.”<sup>125</sup>

68. Similarly, in Brazil, Afro-descendant journalists are underrepresented among those who work in the media. When they do gain access to media companies, they are assigned lower-ranking positions<sup>126</sup> and receive lower salaries than their white colleagues.<sup>127</sup> In this context, in 2020, GloboNews decided to carry out “an edition of the #EnPauta program only with black journalists to respond to an increasingly latent social demand for the elimination of racism and for the expansion of spaces for representation of the black population in the media.”<sup>128</sup> The program featured only one Afro-descendant male journalist. The remaining journalists were Afro-Brazilian women and two of them were designated as permanent commentators on the program from that moment on.<sup>129</sup> According to information released by

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<sup>123</sup> Sentiido Foundation and Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision. [Implementación del Cap. I de la Plataforma de Beijing: mujeres, medios y comunicación en Colombia 2020](#). 2020.

<sup>124</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 19.

<sup>125</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 19.

<sup>126</sup> Article 19. [Gênero & Mídia. Aplicação dos indicadores de equidade de gênero para mídia da Unesco](#). Received by email on February 28, 2018. Pages 12 and 14.

<sup>127</sup> Brazilian Network of Journalists and Communicators with a Gender and Race Vision. [Panorama de la actuación de las mujeres en el periodismo brasileño y caminos para la construcción de una comunicación en la perspectiva de género](#). November 7, 2020.

<sup>128</sup> Brazilian Network of Journalists and Communicators with a Gender and Race Vision. [Panorama de la actuación de las mujeres en el periodismo brasileño y caminos para la construcción de una comunicación en la perspectiva de género](#). November 7, 2020.

<sup>129</sup> Brazilian Network of Journalists and Communicators with a Gender and Race Vision. [Panorama de la actuación de las mujeres en el periodismo brasileño y caminos para la construcción de una comunicación en la perspectiva de género](#). November 7, 2020.

- the Brazilian Network of Journalists and Communicators with a Gender and Race Vision., the broadcast of the program “was a response to internet criticism regarding what had happened on the station the day before: seven white journalists doing analysis on topics related to racial issues, in the midst of the protests against racism that began in the United States after the death of George Floyd and that took over the world.”<sup>130</sup>
69. These patterns are replicated in Ecuador. Only 8% of those who work in the media identify themselves as “Afro-descendant” and 3.5% as “indigenous”.<sup>131</sup> Those who manage to access the media face situations of intersectional discrimination, for example in relation to the assignment of tasks. In this sense, they report that “there is a prejudice that ‘black people should cover issues of culture or sports’”.<sup>132</sup>
  70. Regarding indigenous people in the rest of the countries of the region, the preliminary findings of the Global Media Monitoring Project developed in 2020 indicate that “in Latin America, indigenous people constitute only 1% of the subjects and sources (people seen, heard, or talked about) in television news despite being 8% of the region's population”.<sup>133</sup> Also, “of this small proportion, only 3 out of ten are women.”<sup>134</sup>
  71. Concerning discrimination against women journalists based on their gender and age, Colombian journalists report that “in [the] first stage of exercising the profession, interns and recent graduates are usually treated as young girls. It is also common that due to their youth it is assumed that they know nothing, so they receive condescending treatment, their intellectual and work capacity is underestimated, and they are even questioned about their way of dressing, which does not happen with men of the same age.”<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Brazilian Network of Journalists and Communicators with a Gender and Race Vision. [Panorama de la actuación de las mujeres en el periodismo brasileño y caminos para la construcción de una comunicación en la perspectiva de género](#). November 7, 2020.

<sup>131</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 25, according to data from the Council for the Regulation and Development of Information and Communication.

<sup>132</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 25.

<sup>133</sup> Global Media Monitoring Project, [¿Qué avances hay para la igualdad de género en las noticias 25 años después de Beijing?](#), March 3, 2021. Page 2

<sup>134</sup> Global Media Monitoring Project, [¿Qué avances hay para la igualdad de género en las noticias 25 años después de Beijing?](#), March 3, 2021. Page 2

<sup>135</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 17.

- However, it should be noted that these patterns of discrimination "are not unusual, nor do they decrease with the passing of time."<sup>136</sup>
72. 68. At the same time, the 2020 World Media Monitoring Project identified that among women who work as television presenters or reporters in Latin America, "85% and 59%, respectively, are in the age range between 19 and 49 years."<sup>137</sup> According to the organizations in charge of the investigation, this situation "could account for an invisibility of women in older age ranges, and even more so in ranges of people over 65 years of age, where women in the news begin to disappear. This fact may reflect incidences in the absence of public gender policies for older adult women, as well as the pressure of the Western stereotype of beauty related to eternal youth as a parameter for women."<sup>138</sup>
73. In relation to LGBTI persons, the IACHR has recognized that societies of the region "are dominated by entrenched ideas and cultural patterns of heteronormativity, cisnormativity, sexual hierarchy, sex and gender binaries, and misogyny."<sup>139</sup> In this context, in the region and other parts of the world, "LGBTI people are subject to invasive questions about their private lives at work, they must adjust to demands of binary concepts of femininity or masculinity to achieve acceptance in this area and in many cases hide, deny or keep secret their sexual orientation and gender identity either to access a job, not lose it or avoid situations of harassment, ridicule, or retaliation."<sup>140</sup>
74. In Colombia, "journalists and communicators with gender identities and sexual orientation different from heteronormative ones, although they are exposed to the same psychological and sexual violence on and off the internet as cisgender and heterosexual women, [face] an additional burden related to the expression of their identity or sexuality."<sup>141</sup> In particular, "it is common that their professional ability to deal with the hard issues of

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<sup>136</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 17.

<sup>137</sup> GMMP. World Media Monitoring Project 2020. [¿Quién figura en las noticias? Informe Regional. América Latina](#). No date. Page 23.

<sup>138</sup> GMMP. World Media Monitoring Project 2020. [¿Quién figura en las noticias? Informe Regional. América Latina](#). No date. Page 30.

<sup>139</sup> IACHR. [Business and Human Rights: Inter-American Standards](#). November 1, 2019. OEA/Ser.L/V/II IACHR/REDESCA/INF.1/19. Para. 380.

<sup>140</sup> IACHR. [Business and Human Rights: Inter-American Standards](#). November 1, 2019. OEA/Ser.L/V/II IACHR/REDESCA/INF.1/19. Para. 381, citing ILO. Discrimination at work based on sexual orientation and gender identity: Results of the ILO PRIDE project (Fact sheet).

<sup>141</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 20.

- journalism is questioned; in addition, control is exercised over the expression of their femininity, a stigmatizing language is used with and about them, and their body is sexualized.”<sup>142</sup>
75. In Argentina, the demand for the implementation of a job quota for trans people has begun to form part of labor negotiations within the media.<sup>143</sup> Similarly, in Ecuador, journalists report that many media outlets include questions about a person's sexual orientation during hiring processes.<sup>144</sup>
76. However, there are still shortcomings in the production and dissemination of accurate and up-to-date information on patterns of intersectional discrimination against women based on their sexual orientation and gender identity within the media. There are also gaps in the generation of statistics in relation to discriminatory practices that affect other groups of women.

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<sup>142</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 20.

<sup>143</sup> World Association for Christian Communication- WACC, ALC Communication, FUNDEPS, Communication for Equality. [Informe Nacional Argentina](#). 2019. Page 2.

<sup>144</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 26.



CHAPTER II

**GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE  
WITHIN THE MEDIA**



77. As the Office of the Special Rapporteur pointed out in its report “Women journalists and freedom of expression”, violence against women journalists and media workers “manifests itself in different ways, from murder, sexual violence, including sexual harassment to intimidation, abuse of power, and threats based on gender”<sup>145</sup>. This form of violence –which also represents a form of gender-based discrimination and a violation of women's human rights– is not only exercised by State officials and sources of information in the public space but, on numerous occasions, it is perpetrated by colleagues and hierarchical superiors in the workplace.<sup>146</sup> In particular, a set of investigations and initiatives developed in recent years show that women journalists and media workers in the region are exposed to acts of sexual violence and/or sexual harassment<sup>147</sup> in newsrooms and/or inside the media.
78. In Argentina, of a total of 405 women journalists who participated in a survey carried out in 2019, 24% indicated that there had been cases of sexual abuse in their current workplace.<sup>148</sup> 28% indicated that sexual harassment is one of the main challenges faced by women journalists in the exercise of their profession.<sup>149</sup>
79. In Brazil, 7 out of 10 journalists have heard comments or jokes of a sexual nature about women in their workplace and 9 out of 10 have heard jokes or

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<sup>145</sup> IACHR. [Annual Report 2013. Report of the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression](#). Chapter III (Violence against journalists and media workers: inter-American standards and national practices on prevention, protection, and prosecution). OEA/Ser.L/V/II.149. Doc. 50. December 31, 2013. Para. 251.

<sup>146</sup> IACHR. [Annual Report 2013. Report of the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression](#) Chapter III (Violence against journalists and media workers: inter-American standards and national practices on prevention, protection, and prosecution). OEA/Ser.L/V/II.149. Doc. 50. December 31, 2013. Para. 251. The RFOE cites different sources, including: CIMAC. Diagnostic report. [Violencia contra mujeres periodistas. México 2010-2011](#). September 7, 2012. Page 11; Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ). June 7, 2011. [El Crimen Silenciado: Violencia Sexual y Periodistas](#).

<sup>147</sup> The term sexual harassment includes sexual harassment that “occurs when a male or female worker is required to provide a sexual service, the acceptance or rejection of which will be decisive for the person who demands it to make a decision that is favorable or, on the contrary, detrimental to the employment status of the harassed person” and “all conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, or humiliating work environment.” ILO. [Ending violence and harassment against women and men in the world of work](#). First edition 2017. Page 11.

<sup>148</sup> Argentine Journalism Forum. [Mujeres periodistas en la Argentina. Situación laboral y rol profesional de las comunicadoras en el país](#). November 2018. Page 31.

<sup>149</sup> Argentine Journalism Forum. [Mujeres periodistas en la Argentina. Situación laboral y rol profesional de las comunicadoras en el país](#). November 2018. Page 24.



- comments with sexist content.<sup>150</sup> 77% of women journalists have received comments about their body or physical appearance from male colleagues (in 56% of cases) or from hierarchical superiors (in 36% of situations).<sup>151</sup>
80. Brazilian women journalists also report situations of sexual harassment by their bosses, co-workers, or sources. In fact, 70% claim to be aware of situations of sexual harassment against female colleagues in the workplace by male colleagues or hierarchical superiors.<sup>152</sup> In some cases, these situations are part of the usual way of interacting within the newsrooms, which contributes to their naturalization, creates a climate of tolerance and complicity, and prevents women from finding a safe environment to report them.<sup>153</sup>
81. In addition, of a group of more than 400 women journalists from all over the country who participated in survey carried out in 2017, 17% reported having been victims of acts of physical violence. 18% of them were assaulted by a hierarchical superior and 15% by a co-worker.<sup>154</sup>
82. In Chile, women journalists point out that sexual harassment "is a normalized and invisible practice"<sup>155</sup> exercised in various areas, including newsrooms, by their own colleagues, editors and bosses, among other actors. Gender-based violence is also manifested through "nullification, mansplaining, men who disqualify or disapprove of the comments or work of their female colleagues."<sup>156</sup>
83. In Colombia, 60% of the 160 women journalists who participated in a study carried out by "No Es Hora De Callar" and the Democracy Observatory of the University of Los Andes in 2020 report having been victims of gender-based violence in workplace.<sup>157</sup> 79% of them reported that the aggressor had been a person with a higher position than theirs and 56% indicated that the

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<sup>150</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 14.

<sup>151</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 18.

<sup>152</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 17.

<sup>153</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 16.

<sup>154</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 18.

<sup>155</sup> LATFEM. [Chile: periodistas organizadas contra el acoso sexual en medios](#). September 25, 2019.

<sup>156</sup> LATFEM. [Chile: periodistas organizadas contra el acoso sexual en medios](#). September 25, 2019.

<sup>157</sup> Campaign "No Es Hora De Callar" and Observatory of Democracy of the University of Los Andes. [Violencia en contra de las mujeres periodistas en Colombia](#). November 11, 2020. Page 9.

- violence had been carried out by male co-workers.<sup>158</sup> At the same time, 78% of Colombian women journalists are aware of situations of gender violence against a female colleague.<sup>159</sup>
84. Likewise, 23% of Colombian women journalists reported having been victims of sexual violence in their workplaces.<sup>160</sup> People in a higher position than the victim and male co-workers are the most frequent perpetrators.<sup>161</sup>
  85. For their part, 67.1% of the 346 women journalists and communicators who participated in an online survey published in 2020 by the Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and the Karisma Foundation reported situations of sexual harassment<sup>162</sup> and “a marked and recurrent tendency to sexualize women’s bodies”<sup>163</sup> at all times and in diverse physical and virtual spaces, including work groups in instant messaging applications.<sup>164</sup> These practices are frequently exercised, validated and/or legitimized by people in leadership roles.<sup>165</sup>
  86. In the same sense, 73.4% of women who completed the same online survey reported having experienced one or more manifestations of psychological violence.<sup>166</sup> Based on these figures, the organizations conclude that “[the]

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<sup>158</sup> Campaign “No Es Hora De Callar” and Observatory of Democracy of the University of Los Andes. [Violencia en contra de las mujeres periodistas en Colombia](#). November 11, 2020. Page 9.

<sup>159</sup> Campaign “No Es Hora De Callar” and Observatory of Democracy of the University of Los Andes. [Violencia en contra de las mujeres periodistas en Colombia](#). November 11, 2020. Page 9.

<sup>160</sup> Campaign “No Es Hora De Callar” and Observatory of Democracy of the University of Los Andes. [Violencia en contra de las mujeres periodistas en Colombia](#). November 11, 2020. Page 13.

<sup>161</sup> Campaign “No Es Hora De Callar” and Observatory of Democracy of the University of Los Andes. [Violencia en contra de las mujeres periodistas en Colombia](#). November 11, 2020. Page 14.

<sup>162</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 21. 21.2% of the men who answered the survey reported this same type of violence. *Id.*

<sup>163</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 21.

<sup>164</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 21.

<sup>165</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 21.

<sup>166</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 18.

psychological violence that is experienced in the exercise of journalism has a gender burden directly connected to the fact of being a woman. Control over what is said (or cannot be said) and the female body is the preferential reason for exercising violence.”<sup>167</sup>

87. In this context, in 2017, the Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision of Colombia launched the campaign *#PeriodistasSinAcoso*. Among other objectives, the campaign sought to “carry out pedagogical work with women and men journalists so that they recognize harassment behaviors in the journalistic exercise early and prevent situations of gender violence. In addition, [it hoped] that people who recognize themselves as victims could file complaints.”<sup>168</sup>
88. In Ecuador, 25% of women journalist report having experienced situations of workplace harassment by a male journalist who held a position of superior.<sup>169</sup> Situations of harassment are more frequent among women who have less professional experience or are less recognized.<sup>170</sup>
89. In the United States, during 2017, the media disclosed a series of complaints about acts of sexual harassment and violence allegedly committed by renowned journalists and media executives, inside and outside the workplace.<sup>171</sup> In said country, the *#MeToo* movement contributed to creating the conditions for journalists and media workers, and other groups of women from different countries, to make visible the situations of gender-

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“In contrast, the three most common manifestations among the 71.2% of men who claimed to have experienced psychological violence are yelling, manipulation, and humiliation in person (23%); threats, intimidation to their integrity and that of their family in physical spaces (21.2%); and attempts to silence their expressions or opinions on the internet or digital platforms (19.5%).”

<sup>167</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 19.

<sup>168</sup> Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision. [Periodistas sin acoso](#). February 9, 2018.

<sup>169</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 36.

<sup>170</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 36.

<sup>171</sup> The New York Times. April 19, 2017. [Bill O'Reilly Is Forced Out at Fox News](#); El País. April 20, 2017. [La Fox despide a su presentador estrella, Bill O'Reilly, tras varias denuncias por acoso sexual](#); CBS. No date. [CBS News suspends Charlie Rose over sexual misconduct allegations \(VIDEO\)](#); CNN. November 21, 2017. [CBS despide a periodista Charlie Rose tras 8 denuncias de acoso sexual](#).

- based violence that they experience in different areas of their professional, work, or academic life<sup>172</sup>.
90. In this sense, in 2019, Mexican journalists used social networks to publicize their testimonies about the experiences of sexual harassment they had experienced within the media through the hashtag *#MetooPeriodistasMexicanos*. A survey on the scope and use of the hashtag reveals that the denounced acts are perpetrated by “male reporters who take advantage of the spaces of coexistence with their female colleagues, inside or outside the newsroom, to touch them, try to kiss them, or convince them to have sexual relations. In other cases, men take advantage of spaces of trust to try to corner their female colleagues to go out together, and in other cases, male reporters who have been in the business longer and offer to help younger women in exchange for sexual relations or erotic games. The testimonies have also denounced practices of workplace violence, contempt for the work of female reporters and practices that make women journalists uncomfortable, such as their colleagues viewing pornography in the workplace, greeting them by trying to kiss them on the lips, or sending them messages of texts with sexual content, among others.”<sup>173</sup>
  91. In line with these testimonies, a study carried out in 2019 on a sample of 392 women journalists revealed that 72% of them had experienced or were experiencing a situation of sexual harassment in the workplace.<sup>174</sup> These attacks are carried out by “their male colleagues, both immediate bosses and co-workers from the media where they work, as well as from other media.”<sup>175</sup> This means that, for many women, “[the] newsroom [is] the first area from which risks, vulnerability, and the feeling of abandonment arise.”<sup>176</sup>
  92. Similarly, in Nicaragua, journalists point out: “sexual harassment by bosses, colleagues and sources makes our work more difficult; when they are rejected, they take offense and try to sabotage you.”<sup>177</sup> In Honduras, journalists have reported similar situations of sexual harassment in the

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<sup>172</sup> UN Women. [Cronograma: igualdad de género. Resumen del año 2017](#); New York Times. April 16, 2018. [New York Times and New Yorker Share Pulitzer for Public Service](#).

<sup>173</sup> CIMAC. [Periodistas mexicanas rompen silencio ante acoso sexual en medios](#). March 25, 2019.

<sup>174</sup> United Mexican Journalists Collective. [AcosoDATA. Sondeo sobre acoso, hostigamiento y violencia sexual contra las mujeres que trabajan en medios periodísticos en México](#). March 2019. Page 5.

<sup>175</sup> Collective of Security Analysis with Democracy. [Informe Libertad de Expresión en México 2020](#). July 2020. Page 19.

<sup>176</sup> Collective of Security Analysis with Democracy. [Informe Libertad de Expresión en México 2020](#). July 2020. Page 24.

<sup>177</sup> Ceroseenta. [8M: Esto es ser periodista y mujer en Latinoamérica](#). September 6, 2018.

- workplace and passive and/or aggressive and disqualifying responses to complaints.<sup>178</sup>
93. In relation to online violence against women,<sup>179</sup> a study carried out by the Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and the Karisma Foundation in Colombia “confirmed that sexist violence in the exercise of the profession occurs in a continuum between analog and digital spaces.”<sup>180</sup> According to these organizations, the various forms and manifestations of violence that were reported by the women journalists and communicators who participated in the investigation “continually cross the borders of analog and digital, often without even being able to be distinguished. For example, many female journalists and communicators frequently cited WhatsApp as one of the most common means for male supervisors, colleagues, sources, and advertisers to harass them.”<sup>181</sup>
94. Women journalists and communicators from other countries in the region have reported similar patterns of violence or harassment by people with whom they share newsrooms or workspaces. In this sense, they emphasize “how frustrating it is to see that the violence comes from the very newsrooms of the media for which one works and from the same colleagues; It is such a normalized form of violence that it is subtle and that is why it happens without much surprise’.”<sup>182</sup> It has been pointed out that “this type of violence has the same intentions of silencing and diverting the work of the people attacked. In addition, it puts the victims [and survivors] in the position of knowing that if they report they could lose their job and put their safety at risk due to the level of normalization of violence they experience within the medium.”<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Informative Plane. March 8, 2018. [Periodistas enfrentan violencia de género y desigualdad laboral.](#)

<sup>179</sup> Online violence against women has been understood as “any act of gender-based violence against women committed, assisted, or aggravated in part or in whole by the use of ICT communications technologies, such as mobile phones and smartphones, the Internet and social networks, platforms or email, against a woman because she is a woman, or affects women disproportionately” UN. Human Rights Council. A/HRC/38/47: Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences on online violence against women and girls from a human rights perspective. A/HRC/38/47. June 18, 2018. Para. 23.

<sup>180</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras.](#) Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 26.

<sup>181</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras.](#) R Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 26.

<sup>182</sup> [Sandra Chaher, Lina Cuellar. Ser periodista en Twitter : violencia de género digital en América Latina. Comunicación para la Igualdad Ediciones, Sentiido, UNESCO. 2020.](#) Page 50.

<sup>183</sup> [Sandra Chaher, Lina Cuellar. Ser periodista en Twitter : violencia de género digital en América Latina. Comunicación para la Igualdad Ediciones, Sentiido, UNESCO. 2020.](#) Page 50.

95. As a consequence of the high prevalence of acts of gender-based violence within the media –and, in particular, of acts that constitute violence and/or sexual harassment–, many women journalists decide to leave their workplace, or they are forced to make decisions that result in an involuntary transformation of their professional career.
96. In Colombia, 3 out of 10 women journalists who were part of a thematic study carried out in 2020 revealed that "they have had to leave work spaces due to situations of gender-based violence."<sup>184</sup> In Mexico, of a total of 284 journalists whose experiences were surveyed in 2019, 61% indicated that violence had an impact on their job performance. When describing this impact they pointed out: "I had to quit my job because I felt very uncomfortable', 'It has made me rethink continuing to work in that place, since I couldn't feel calm', 'You stop acting freely, you try not to call for attention 'inappropriately', you have low profile so that they let you work and they don't harass you', 'It has led me to think if I am really good at doing my job', 'I have inevitably thought that if I don't see myself or act more like those bosses or colleagues have 'suggested', I will not continue advancing in my career'."<sup>185</sup>
97. Thus, gender-based violence in the workplace not only impacts the right of women journalists and media workers to carry out their work free from all forms of violence and discrimination. As they themselves point out, "discrimination, harassment, and other manifestations of gender-based violence against women in the media are also attacks on freedom of expression, particularly serious for those who incorporate a gender and human rights approach into their work."<sup>186</sup>
98. In order to help "mitigate exhaustion and trauma and, consequently, self-censorship"<sup>187</sup> in the exercise of journalistic activity and other "high-risk work fields",<sup>188</sup> the Guardian Project and ARTICLE 19 developed *Círculo*, a space secure digital network that "provides a safe way for people to communicate with each other in their networks and communities when facing and challenging harassment and violence."<sup>189</sup> According to the organizations involved in its development, this tool was built in a

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<sup>184</sup> Campaign "No Es Hora De Callar" and Observatory of Democracy of the University of Los Andes. [Violencia en contra de las mujeres periodistas en Colombia](#). November 11, 2020. Page 28.

<sup>185</sup> United Mexican Journalists Collective. [AcosoDATA. Sondeo sobre acoso, hostigamiento y violencia sexual contra las mujeres que trabajan en medios periodísticos en México](#). March 2019. Page 16.

<sup>186</sup> LATFEM. [Chile: periodistas organizadas contra el acoso sexual en medios](#). September 25, 2019.

<sup>187</sup> Information available at <https://encirculo.org/es/>

<sup>188</sup> Information available at <https://encirculo.org/es/>

<sup>189</sup> Information available at <https://encirculo.org/es/>

participatory manner, collecting the experience, needs, and concerns of women and journalists and communicators, and it is hoped that they "become part of the comprehensive security protocols and tools that allow women journalists to reduce the risks related to their work."<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>190</sup> Information provided by the Guardian Project and ARTICLE 19 in the framework of the consultation for the preparation of the RFOE reference document on progress, challenges, and recommendations for the prevention of violence and the fight against discrimination against women journalists.

## CHAPTER III

# **THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN ERADICATING AND ADDRESSING GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND/OR DISCRIMINATION IN THE NEWSROOM: PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES**





99. As the Office of the Special Rapporteur has pointed out, “although the obligations to prevent, protect, and investigate are an international responsibility for States, it is undeniable that there are other actors of great relevance in the protection of journalists at risk, especially in those areas in which the risk is greater due to the characteristics of the context, as is the case of silenced areas”<sup>191</sup>. In this sense, the media have a decisive role in guaranteeing the protection of journalists and other workers.<sup>192</sup> In particular, the report “Women journalists and freedom of expression” highlights that “the media should adopt measures to guarantee the safety of women journalists against gender-based risks.”<sup>193</sup>
100. In this context, in the aforementioned report, this Office expressed its concern at the omission of many communication companies to adopt protocols or internal rules that adequately guarantee the rights of women journalists and media workers who experience situations of gender-based violence in their workplace.<sup>194</sup> In this sense, the Office of the Special Rapporteur described that “in the Americas, internal ‘mediation’ mechanisms continue to prevail instead of effective remedies that allow the protection of the victim and establishing responsibilities for the perpetrator. Sexual harassment from a source is generally trivialized. This lack of protection for the victim generates impunity, sends a negative

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<sup>191</sup> IACHR. [Annual Report 2016. Report of the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression](#). Chapter IV (“Silenced Zones: highly dangerous areas for the exercise freedom of expression”). OEA/Ser.L/V/II.Doc. 22/17. March 15, 2017. Page 319.

<sup>192</sup> IACHR. [Annual Report 2016. Report of the Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression](#). Chapter IV (“Silenced Zones: highly dangerous areas for the exercise freedom of expression”). OEA/Ser.L/V/II.Doc. 22/17. March 15, 2017. Page 319. See also UN. United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). International Program for the Development of Communication. [UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity](#). 2012. Points 5.16, 5.17, 5.22. UN. General Assembly. [The safety of journalists and the issue of impunity](#). Resolution A/C.3/72/L.35/Rev.1. November 13, 2017. [UN Plan of Action on the Safety of Journalists and the Issue of Impunity](#). 2012.

<sup>193</sup> IACHR. [Women Journalists and Freedom of Expression: Discrimination and gender-based faced by women journalists in the exercise of their profession](#). OEA/SER.L/V/II IACHR/RELE/INF.20/18. 2018. Para. 135.

<sup>194</sup> IACHR. [Women Journalists and Freedom of Expression: Discrimination and gender-based faced by women journalists in the exercise of their profession](#). OEA/SER.L/V/II IACHR/RELE/INF.20/18. 2018. Para. 136.

- message to women journalists that can incite more violence against them and leads to silencing.”<sup>195</sup>
101. In order to contribute in eradicating these practices, the Office of the Special Rapporteur considered that the media should “[establish] internal policies with specific provisions on gender-based violence and discrimination, with emphasis on workplace and sexual harassment.”<sup>196</sup> It also pointed out that “there should be internal procedures and independent reporting and accountability mechanisms that guarantee the rights of women journalists and all parties involved.”<sup>197</sup>
102. The Office of the Special Rapporteur for Freedom of Expression recognizes and positively values the leadership of the Inter-American Press Association -IAPA- in addressing these challenges within the media. In particular, the resolution on “violence against women journalists” adopted at the mid-year meeting held virtually in April 2021 stands out. There, the IAPA indicates that: i) it condemns cases of violence against women journalists: ii) it requests journalistic companies to eliminate all types of gender differentiation in terms of benefits and rights, encouraging them to improve protocols against workplace sexual harassment, ensuring an environment free of harassment, in such a way that the safety of women journalists is also guaranteed through self-protection guides and specialized training, and iii) exhort the States, the journalistic union, and the media of the continent to undertake actions under the dimension of the current debate that is opening a new agenda for the respect of the rights of women in all fields.
103. In line with these recommendations, at least thirteen media groups from Latin America and the Caribbean and twenty-one media from North America<sup>198</sup> have already adhered to UN Women’s “UN Women Media Compact”. The Pact encourages the media to make progress so that “[t]hrough gender-responsive decision-making, it can enable equality in the newsrooms by ensuring women journalists are given similar opportunities as their male colleagues and can cover diverse subjects from politics to business, science, sports, and technology, while encouraging male journalists to also cover diverse issues, including women’s rights and

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<sup>195</sup> IACHR. [Women Journalists and Freedom of Expression: Discrimination and gender-based faced by women journalists in the exercise of their profession](#). OEA/SER.L/V/II IACHR/RELE/INF.20/18. 2018. Para. 136.

<sup>196</sup> IACHR. [Women Journalists and Freedom of Expression: Discrimination and gender-based faced by women journalists in the exercise of their profession](#). OEA/SER.L/V/II IACHR/RELE/INF.20/18. 2018. Para. 176 subparagraph c).

<sup>197</sup> IACHR. [Women Journalists and Freedom of Expression: Discrimination and gender-based faced by women journalists in the exercise of their profession](#). OEA/SER.L/V/II IACHR/RELE/INF.20/18. 2018. Para. 137, citing UN Women and United Nations Global Compact Office. [Women’s Empowerment Principles](#). 2011.

<sup>198</sup> UN Women. [UN Women Media Compact partners](#). No date.

- gender equality stories” and “[to] ensure women journalists are provided mentors and guidance for career advancement”,<sup>199</sup> among other measures.
104. Despite this progress, the information outlined in the preceding sections suggests that many media companies have not yet adopted and/or implemented effective actions to address gender-based violence and discrimination that women journalists and media workers must face in the newsrooms. Recent research on the subject and the testimonies of women journalists and media workers themselves confirm this trend.
105. In Argentina, it has been pointed out that “[regardless] of the clear situation of inequality between men and women in the media, companies do not seem to realize the need to take measures to prevent and eradicate these discriminatory and violent logics.”<sup>200</sup> In particular, “most companies do not have a Gender Office or Area; nor of a specific sector for the resolution of problems of gender-based violence and/or workplace and sexual harassment and abuse. Only large companies (listed on the stock exchange and due to pressure from shareholders) and the media belonging to civil society organizations have areas to address gender-based issues and concerns about this workspace dimension.”<sup>201</sup>
106. A study carried out in 2018 on a sample of more than 400 women journalists confirms this trend. Only 10% of the participants reported that in their workplace there is an area aimed at dealing with situations of gender-based sexual harassment or discrimination. In most cases, this is dealt from the Human Resources area of the company, without there being a specific gender area.<sup>202</sup>
107. The results of this study were summarized in the “Protocol for the Prevention of gender violence”<sup>203</sup> of the Tripartite Communication Commission of the province of Córdoba, which is made up of the Ministry of Labor, employers, and the press union of the province of Córdoba. The protocol, adopted in 2018, was developed in order to “establish common

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<sup>199</sup> UN Women. [UN Women Media Compact](#). No date.

<sup>200</sup> Virginia Pedraza, Women in the workplace of the media, in [Argentina: medios de comunicación y género ;hemos cumplido con la plataforma de acción de Beijing?](#), compiled by Sandra Chaher, Communication for Equality Editions, 2018, page 68.

<sup>201</sup> World Association for Christian Communication- WACC, ALC Communication, FUNDEPS, Communication for Equality. [Informe Nacional Argentina](#). 2019. Page 1.

<sup>202</sup> Argentine Journalism Forum. [Mujeres periodistas en la Argentina. Situación laboral y rol profesional de las comunicadoras en el país](#). November 2018. Page 31.

<sup>203</sup> Other protocols in force in Argentina are: the [“Protocolo de Acción en casos de Violencia Laboral para Trabajadoras de Medios de Comunicación”](#), adopted by the Tucumán Press Association in 2019; the [Protocolo de actuación ante casos de violencia de género hacia las mujeres y disidencias](#) of the Santa Fe Press Association.

- procedures for prevention, assistance, and protection for women in the media throughout the province of Córdoba.”<sup>204</sup>
108. The document provides that women in situations of gender-based violence “will have the right to request a license for gender-based violence.”<sup>205</sup> They will also “have the alternative of being able to attend an office separate from their places of work to make their inquiries to preserve their identity and privacy. There they will receive the necessary attention and primary care.”<sup>206</sup>
109. Regarding the approach to reports of violence, the protocol establishes that “companies will have the obligation to open internal administrative proceedings with the intervention of the [Trade Union Circle of the Press and Communication of Córdoba], if so ordered by the victim”<sup>207</sup> and to apply direct sanctions to the aggressors. Regarding the nature of the sanctions, the following are mentioned: compensation to the victim, the imposition of suspensions and/or the removal of the aggressor from their post.
110. The Protocol also establishes that the press union, together with the companies, must elect a gender delegate in each of the communication media. The gender delegate will be in charge of “observing that the protocol is complied with, collaborating with the Company in the corresponding investigations and [being] the first contact for those who consider themselves harmed by some of the types of violence.”<sup>208</sup>
111. Regarding the progress made and the pending challenges in other countries, in Brazil, 55% of the 477 journalists who participated in a study carried out in 2017 reported that the media outlet where they worked had a gender policy. These policies or actions included awareness campaigns on sexual harassment, equal employment opportunities for men and women, a lactation room, daycare centers, and extended maternity leave, among others.<sup>209</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Trade Union Circle of the Press and Communication of Córdoba. [Protocolo de prevención para empresas periodísticas](#). September 13, 2019.

<sup>205</sup> Trade Union Circle of the Press and Communication of Córdoba. [Protocolo de prevención para empresas periodísticas](#). September 13, 2019. A similar measure was adopted in 2018 by the newspaper La Mañana of the province of Formosa. ADEPA. [La Mañana de Formosa implementa políticas contra la violencia de género](#). August 14, 2018.

<sup>206</sup> Trade Union Circle of the Press and Communication of Córdoba. [Protocolo de prevención para empresas periodísticas](#). September 13, 2019.

<sup>207</sup> Trade Union Circle of the Press and Communication of Córdoba. [Protocolo de prevención para empresas periodísticas](#). September 13, 2019.

<sup>208</sup> Trade Union Circle of the Press and Communication of Córdoba. [Protocolo de prevención para empresas periodísticas](#). September 13, 2019.

<sup>209</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 20.

112. Concerning the approach to situations of gender-based violence, 50% indicated that their company had not adopted adequate measures to protect the safety of journalists and only 30% reported that the company where they worked had implemented complaint mechanisms for situations of gender-based violence or discrimination. Among the latter, only a minority of them defined these channels as "adequate and effective."<sup>210</sup>
113. In this context, when addressed, situations of harassment are resolved through "informal channels and personal relationships."<sup>211</sup> However, as a rule, these forms of violence are minimized and covered up and women are required to "review their own behaviour"<sup>212</sup> or learn to deal with these situations. This translates into very low levels (15%) of formal reporting of situations of harassment in the workplace.<sup>213</sup>
114. In Chile, women journalists also point out that "there is still a lot of resistance within newsrooms regarding the need to train on gender issues".<sup>214</sup> In particular, they denounce that "disinformation persists regarding the existence or not of equality policies within the media and journalistic companies, as well as protocols for reporting discrimination, harassment, sexual abuse and gender-based violence against women."<sup>215</sup> In this context, the Chilean journalists point out: "sometimes the harassment is confronted, other times it is evaded and there are times when uncomfortable smiles are held."<sup>216</sup>
115. In Colombia, according to an investigation carried out in 2020, "only 23.8% of the journalists surveyed believe that their workspace has spaces to receive support in situations of gender-based violence."<sup>217</sup> 29% believe that the medium has spaces for reporting. In addition, only 4 out of 10 journalists believe that "the medium in which they work encourages

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<sup>210</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Pages 18 and 20.

<sup>211</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 19.

<sup>212</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 19.

<sup>213</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 20.

<sup>214</sup> Women in the media. [Este 8M periodistas feministas nos sumamos a la huelga](#). March 8, 2019.

<sup>215</sup> González Díaz, Nataly. [#DíaInternacional Periodista: Periodismo Feminista Para Erradicar las Desigualdades de Género](#). September 8, 2020.

<sup>216</sup> LATFEM. [Chile: periodistas organizadas contra el acoso sexual en medios](#). September 25, 2019

<sup>217</sup> Campaign "No Es Hora De Callar" and Observatory of Democracy of the University of Los Andes. [Violencia en contra de las mujeres periodistas en Colombia](#). November 11, 2020. Page 25.

- reporting sexual harassment or abuse.”<sup>218</sup> In this context, the general conclusion reached by Colombian journalists is that “the media do not have, for the most part, adequate reporting and support spaces.”<sup>219</sup>
116. In Ecuador, women journalists point out that gender-based violence is normalized by the media as part of the job. In particular, in many media companies, when faced with a report of situations of gender-based violence perpetrated by a boss, a colleague, or a source, “instead of supporting the victim and taking measures to stop these situations, at most they issue a warning, the woman is required to continue her work with her aggressor, and is even asked to exploit the situation in her favor and thus obtain any information that is required.”<sup>220</sup> Consequently, many women journalists feel that they could be harmed or put their careers at risk if they make a complaint about situations of harassment or violence.
117. In Mexico, although progress has been reported,<sup>221</sup> 76% of the 392 Mexican women journalists who participated in a survey carried out in 2019 indicated that “in their companies there is no type of campaign, course or action to raise staff awareness about harassment and sexual harassment”<sup>222</sup> and 56% reported that “in their media there are no specialized mechanisms or protocols to file complaints for cases of harassment or sexual assault”.<sup>223</sup> This situation discourages reporting, to the point that “[only] 18% of women who have experienced a situation of

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<sup>218</sup> Campaign “No Es Hora De Callar” and Observatory of Democracy of the University of Los Andes. [Violencia en contra de las mujeres periodistas en Colombia](#). November 11, 2020. Page 25.

<sup>219</sup> Campaign “No Es Hora De Callar” and Observatory of Democracy of the University of Los Andes. [Violencia en contra de las mujeres periodistas en Colombia](#). November 11, 2020. Page 26.

<sup>220</sup> GAMAG. [Situación de las mujeres en los medios de comunicación y en las TICS](#). September 2019. Page 2.

<sup>221</sup> For example, TV Azteca has established a Gender Unit dedicated to “receiving and reviewing cases in which practices of violence, harassment, and discrimination are reported within the company, with the aim of strengthening an environment free of violence through sensitization of all collaborators. Among the services provided by the Gender Unit, the following are listed: attention to complaints of workplace violence, awareness of issues of workplace violence, prevention strategies for workplace violence, development of communication and dissemination campaigns against workplace violence, emotional support for those who work here.” Grupo Salinas. [Primer aniversario de la Unidad de Género de TV Azteca](#). No date.

<sup>222</sup> United Mexican Journalists Collective. [AcosoDATA. Sondeo sobre acoso, hostigamiento y violencia sexual contra las mujeres que trabajan en medios periodísticos en México](#). March 2019. Page 6.

<sup>223</sup> United Mexican Journalists Collective. [AcosoDATA. Sondeo sobre acoso, hostigamiento y violencia sexual contra las mujeres que trabajan en medios periodísticos en México](#). March 2019. Page 6.

- bullying, harassment, or sexual assault in their media have made a complaint within their companies.”<sup>224</sup>
118. 113. When they manage to overcome these institutional barriers and report acts of violence, women journalists and media workers find that their complaints are not addressed effectively. On the contrary, according to the aforementioned study, “of the total number of women who said they had filed a complaint for this type of situation, 64% indicated that the company did nothing or that the measures it took were insufficient or did not work.”<sup>225</sup>
119. On the other hand, the IACHR has highlighted the role that the media can play in disseminating campaigns and, in general, communication strategies, aimed at transforming social perceptions and gender stereotypes,<sup>226</sup> thus contributing to combat discrimination against women.

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<sup>224</sup> United Mexican Journalists Collective. [AcosoDATA. Sondeo sobre acoso, hostigamiento y violencia sexual contra las mujeres que trabajan en medios periodísticos en México](#). March 2019. Page 6.

<sup>225</sup> United Mexican Journalists Collective. [AcosoDATA. Sondeo sobre acoso, hostigamiento y violencia sexual contra las mujeres que trabajan en medios periodísticos en México](#). March 2019. Page 6.

<sup>226</sup> IACHR. Violence and discrimination against women and girls. [Standards and recommendations, Annex 1](#). OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc. 233 November 14, 2019, Para. 55





## CHAPTER IV

# **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DEEPENING THE EFFORTS TO ADDRESS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND/OR DISCRIMINATION WITHIN THE MEDIA**



120. The information outlined in this report reveals that, although progress has been made, a significant number of women continue to face barriers in accessing the media based on gender bias. When they succeed, they find that many newsrooms are a hostile space in which they cannot practice journalism on equal terms with their male peers due to generalized patterns of vertical and horizontal segregation, salary gaps, job insecurity, discrimination against women who perform caregiving roles, and other forms of intersectional discrimination.
121. In many newsrooms, there is also a high prevalence of situations of violence and/or sexual harassment, among other forms of gender-based violence. Far from being addressed from a gender perspective, these practices are frequently normalized, which gives rise to an organizational culture that discourages reporting and encourages the repetition of these acts.
122. The fact that many media outlets have not yet made substantial progress in developing policies and/or strategies to address these patterns of violence and discrimination contributes to their perpetuation and/or prevents their correct approach. In this framework, a set of guidelines are developed below -which compile many of the recommendations raised by women journalists and media workers themselves- that aspire to contribute to deepening the progress achieved and effectively address the challenges that still persist to guarantee that women journalists and media workers can carry out their work in newsrooms free from all forms of violence and discrimination.

***a) Recommendations for the adoption of internal policies to promote gender equity and address gender-based violence and discrimination***

1. As already noted, in its report “Women journalists and freedom of expression,” the Office of the Special Rapporteur encouraged the media to “[establish] internal policies with specific provisions on gender-based violence and discrimination, with emphasis in workplace and sexual

harassment.”<sup>227</sup> These policies must be designed with the active participation of women who work in each of the companies.<sup>228</sup>

2. *Transversality of the commitment to gender equality:* several recent investigations on the subject highlight that the policies implemented by the media must be developed in such a way as to transmit the message that gender equality is a key and transversal strategic objective for the entire organization.<sup>229</sup> To this end, its adoption must be accompanied by measures that guarantee the equal representation of men and women in the management bodies of the company and an explicit stance of those who occupy these roles regarding their commitment to the issue.<sup>230</sup>
3. *Minimum content of internal policies on gender equality:* it has been pointed out that the strategies and/or institutional policies adopted by the media to promote gender equality must contemplate specific goals, a precise description of the actions through which is sought to achieve them and the term in which it is aspired to do so.<sup>231</sup> In particular, it has been recommended that the policy define the period in which the company seeks to eliminate gender pay gaps, achieve gender parity in newsrooms, eliminate the underrepresentation of women in the coverage of certain topics, achieve equal representation in hierarchical positions, and ensure equal hiring conditions between men and women.<sup>232</sup>
4. It is also essential that the content of the policies adopted by companies on gender equality have an intersectional perspective. In particular, these policies should address the patterns of discrimination that LGBTI persons, Afro-descendant women and indigenous women, women with disabilities, among other groups, face within the media.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> IACHR. [Women Journalists and Freedom of Expression: Discrimination and gender-based faced by women journalists in the exercise of their profession](#). OEA/SER.L/V/II IACHR/RELE/INF.20/18. 2018. Para. 176 subparagraph c).

<sup>228</sup> IACHR. [Women Journalists and Freedom of Expression: Discrimination and gender-based faced by women journalists in the exercise of their profession](#). OEA/SER.L/V/II IACHR/RELE/INF.20/18. 2018. Para. 137.

<sup>229</sup> Padovani, Claudia. Media gender equality regimes. In World Association for Christian Communication- WACC, [Media Development 1/2018. Gender and Media—A holistic agenda](#). 2018. Page 13.

<sup>230</sup> Kassova, Luba. [The Missing Perspectives of Women in News](#). International Women’s Media Foundation. November 2020. Page 81.

<sup>231</sup> Kassova, Luba. [The Missing Perspectives of Women in News](#). International Women’s Media Foundation. November 2020. Page 29.

<sup>232</sup> Kassova, Luba. [The Missing Perspectives of Women in News](#). International Women’s Media Foundation. November 2020. Page 80.

<sup>233</sup> In this sense, the *UN Standards of Conduct for Business to tackle LGBTI discrimination*, promoted by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights "highlight the permanent responsibility of companies to respect human rights of these people, the

5. *Strategies to promote the effective implementation of policies on gender equality:* it has been highlighted that companies must designate a person directly responsible for the implementation of these policies and that this designation must fall on someone who plays a hierarchy role within the organization. In addition, there must be participatory mechanisms that allow continuous monitoring and evaluation of the progress and pending challenges in meeting the planned goals.<sup>234</sup>
6. In this sense, women journalists and media workers have pointed out that “newsrooms must organize groups to monitor gender diversity in the newsroom; this group must have a direct communication channel with the management of the media outlet and the duty of preparing periodic reports with analysis of the composition of the newsroom, to guide possible new hires.”<sup>235</sup> This is so because they consider “it is important that there be discussions in the media, that figures be raised, that the figures be known, and that measures can be taken.”<sup>236</sup>
7. The conformation of these follow-up groups and/or spaces for participation must be carried out with an intersectional perspective, so that they adequately represent the diversity of women who are –or should be– present in the newsrooms. In particular, it has been emphasized that “the media must promote the conformation of diverse teams without limiting the participation of women and sexually diverse people, or people of color.”<sup>237</sup>
8. *Capacity-building:* As the Office of the Special Rapporteur pointed out in the report “Women journalists and freedom of expression”, at the same time as policies on gender equality are adopted within media companies, it is also important to develop “systematic capacity-building actions for all personnel working in the media regarding the content and scope of these provisions,

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responsibility to eliminate discrimination, provide support to their LGBTI staff in the workplace, pay attention to the impacts and effects that their business relationships or their products or services generate on LGBTI people, as well as to contribute to eliminating such abuses from their role within the community acting publicly in support of these people.” IACHR. [Business and Human Rights Report: Inter-American Standards](#). November 1, 2019. OEA/Ser.L/V/II IACHR/REDESCA/INF.1/19. Para. 385.

<sup>234</sup> Kassova, Luba. [The Missing Perspectives of Women in News](#). International Women’s Media Foundation. November 2020. Page 29.

<sup>235</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 25. Our translation.

<sup>236</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 41.

<sup>237</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 41.

in order to promote full respect for these policies.”<sup>238</sup> In this sense, women journalists and media workers consider that training programs on diversity and gender equality should reach all personnel who work in companies, including those who hold management positions .<sup>239</sup> They also point out that these programs should be especially aimed at “[training] and fostering a comprehensive and self-critical view among the editorial staff, reporting staff, middle managers, leadership, and owners of the media.”<sup>240</sup> They should also “promote training processes on gender-based violence on and off the internet”<sup>241</sup> and “develop and implement ongoing training processes in digital security with a gender focus.”<sup>242</sup>

## **b) Recommendations for addressing patterns of gender-based discrimination**

1. In relation to the gender-based discrimination practices outlined above, the Office of the Special Rapporteur has encouraged the media to “consider the voluntary adoption of professional codes of conduct aimed at guaranteeing full respect for the rights of women and incorporate the gender perspective in journalistic activity”.<sup>243</sup> These codes of conduct should place special emphasis on “promoting equality in newsrooms by ensuring that women journalists receive equal pay for equal work and have the same

<sup>238</sup> IACHR. [Women Journalists and Freedom of Expression: Discrimination and gender-based faced by women journalists in the exercise of their profession](#). OEA/SER.L/V/II IACHR/RELE/INF.20/18. 2018. Para. 137.

<sup>239</sup> Chaher, Sandra; Pedraza, Virginia (Coord.). [Organizaciones de medios y género : igualdad de oportunidades para mujeres y personas LGTTBIO+ en empresas, sindicatos y universidades](#). FUNDEPS and Communication Civil Association for Equality. 2018. P. 166. See also Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017.

<sup>240</sup> GAMAG. [Perspectiva de género en medios de comunicación salvadoreños](#). No date. Page 6.

In order to “catalyze critical reflection on the intersections between gender issues and journalistic ethics” by those responsible for creating media content, *Who Makes the News* developed a questionnaire (“Gender Ethics Compass”) of 10 questions that seeks to be “used as a tool to start conversations about gender issues in the media, based on the professional perspective of each journalist.” *Who Makes the News*, [Gender Ethics Compass](#), no date.

<sup>241</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 7.

<sup>242</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 7.

<sup>243</sup> IACHR. [Women Journalists and Freedom of Expression: Discrimination and gender-based faced by women journalists in the exercise of their profession](#). OEA/SER.L/V/II IACHR/RELE/INF.20/18. 2018. Para. 176 subparagraph f).

opportunities as their male colleagues and are able to cover diverse topics.”<sup>244</sup>

2. *Strategies to address gender-based discrimination practices within the media:* recent research has emphasized that there must be a clear staff hiring policy that includes objective selection criteria and mechanisms and/or measures aimed at preventing hiring decisions from being based on gender bias.<sup>245</sup> In the same vein, in April 2021, the Inter American Press Association resolved to “[request] journalistic companies to eliminate all types of gender differentiation in terms of benefits and rights”.<sup>246</sup>
3. Among the measures proposed by the organizations of women journalists and media workers, the following are included: “quotas [for women] in leading spaces, incorporation [of a greater number of women] in areas and topics that are restricted or prohibited for female workers, and personnel selection strategies that promote female capacities”.<sup>247</sup> Additionally, the importance of establishing gender quotas in spaces where women are underrepresented has been highlighted.<sup>248</sup>
4. Moreover, in order to break the glass ceiling that affects women in the media, it has been suggested that, when appointing a person in a hierarchical position, when there is a female candidate and a male candidate with equal qualifications, priority should be given to the designation of the

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<sup>244</sup> IACHR. [Women Journalists and Freedom of Expression: Discrimination and gender-based faced by women journalists in the exercise of their profession](#). OEA/SER.L/V/II IACHR/RELE/INF.20/18. 2018. Para. 176 subparagraph f).

<sup>245</sup> Kassova, Luba. [The Missing Perspectives of Women in News](#). International Women’s Media Foundation. November 2020. Page 80.

<sup>246</sup> Inter American Press Association, Resolution on Violence against women journalists, adopted in the framework of the mid-year meeting of the Inter American Press Association, April 21-23, 2021.

<sup>247</sup> Chaher, Sandra; Pedraza, Virginia (Coord.). [Organizaciones de medios y género : igualdad de oportunidades para mujeres y personas LGTTBIO+ en empresas, sindicatos y universidades](#). FUNDEPS and Communication Civil Association for Equality. 2018. Page 166.

<sup>248</sup> Kassova, Luba. [The Missing Perspectives of Women in News](#). International Women’s Media Foundation. November 2020. Page 29.

In the same vein, there is an emphasized need for journalists’ unions, guilds, and associations to guarantee a minimum percentage of women’s participation in leadership positions. Information received in the framework of the consultation for the preparation of a RFOE reference document on progress, challenges, and recommendations for the prevention of violence and the fight against discrimination against women journalists.



female candidate.<sup>249</sup> There should also be leadership training programs specifically geared towards women who work in the media.<sup>250</sup>

5. In addition, the committees dedicated to the selection of personnel, or the determination of promotions must have a diverse composition and the people who integrate them should be trained in gender equality. This, in order to prevent their decisions from being based on gender stereotypes or reflecting and/or perpetuating patterns of discrimination against women.<sup>251</sup>
6. In relation to the patterns of gender-based discrimination against journalists who exercise caregiving roles outlined above, women journalists and media workers consider it necessary to “[generate] policies around care of dependent persons.”<sup>252</sup> These policies must involve the “creation of lactation centers; granting of daycare services according to market values - resolved within the company or the granting of economic resources to that end-; extended maternity/paternity leave; part-time work methodologies for mothers/fathers”,<sup>253</sup> flexible working hours<sup>254</sup> and the promotion of teleworking.<sup>255</sup>
7. *Monitoring and evaluation of the measures adopted:* it has been pointed out that it is essential for the media to monitor the effectiveness of these measures, through the implementation of “regular gender audits to promote fair and transparent recruitment and promotion policies.”<sup>256</sup> In cases where spaces are identified where women are underrepresented, corrective

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<sup>249</sup> Ross, Karen. A hard ladder to climb: women and power in media industries. In World Association for Christian Communication - WACC, [Media Development 1/2018. Gender and Media—A holistic agenda](#). 2018. Page 18.

<sup>250</sup> Chaher, Sandra; Pedraza, Virginia (Coord.). [Organizaciones de medios y género : igualdad de oportunidades para mujeres y personas LGTTBIO+ en empresas, sindicatos y universidades](#). FUNDEPS and Communication Civil Association for Equality. 2018. Page 166.

<sup>251</sup> Ross, Karen. A hard ladder to climb: women and power in media industries. In World Association for Christian Communication - WACC, [Media Development 1/2018. Gender and Media—A holistic agenda](#). 2018. Page 18.

<sup>252</sup> Frydman, Sabrina. Global Media and Gender Alliance. In [Argentina: medios de comunicación y género ¿hemos cumplido con la plataforma de acción de Beijing?](#). Compiled by Chaher, Sandra. Communication for Equality Editions. 2018. Page 11.

<sup>253</sup> Frydman, Sabrina. Global Media and Gender Alliance. In [Argentina: medios de comunicación y género ¿hemos cumplido con la plataforma de acción de Beijing?](#). Compiled by Chaher, Sandra. Communication for Equality Editions. 2018. Page 11.

<sup>254</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 41.

<sup>255</sup> Powerful Girls Ecuador. [Así hacemos periodismo. Condiciones laborales de mujeres en medios de comunicación en Ecuador](#). November 2020. Page 41.

<sup>256</sup> Frydman, Sabrina. Global Media and Gender Alliance. In [Argentina: medios de comunicación y género ¿hemos cumplido con la plataforma de acción de Beijing?](#). Compiled by Chaher, Sandra. Communication for Equality Editions. 2018. Page 11.

measures should be implemented to ensure that hiring and promotion policies are based on objective and transparent criteria.<sup>257</sup>

8. Finally, the media have also been recommended to develop “equity and diversity surveys aimed at all staff, in order to understand the culture of the workplace”.<sup>258</sup>The implementation of this type of survey serves to determine if, in the opinion of the staff, there are situations of gender-based discrimination that require the adoption of measures to address them.<sup>259</sup>

### ***c) Recommendations for addressing patterns of gender-based violence within the media***

1. In its report, the Office of the Special Rapporteur recommended that the media adopt “internal procedures and independent reporting and accountability mechanisms” in situations of gender-based violence and, in particular, in cases of violence and/or sexual harassment.<sup>260</sup> In line with this recommendation, women journalists and media workers consider that companies should adopt a policy of “zero tolerance for workplace harassment and sexual harassment by colleagues, bosses and sources”,<sup>261</sup> which should be designed through participatory and transparent processes.<sup>262</sup> Similarly, the Inter-American Press Association has urged news companies to “ensure an environment free of harassment”.<sup>263</sup>
2. *Explicit commitment to preventing and addressing gender-based violence:* the adoption of this policy must be accompanied by an explicit positioning of those who exercise leadership and/or management roles in the company in

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<sup>257</sup> Ross, Karen. A hard ladder to climb: women and power in media industries. In World Association for Christian Communication - WACC, [Media Development 1/2018. Gender and Media—A holistic agenda](#). 2018. Page 17

<sup>258</sup> Ross, Karen. A hard ladder to climb: women and power in media industries. In World Association for Christian Communication - WACC, [Media Development 1/2018. Gender and Media—A holistic agenda](#). 2018. Page 18.

<sup>259</sup> Ross, Karen. A hard ladder to climb: women and power in media industries. In World Association for Christian Communication - WACC, [Media Development 1/2018. Gender and Media—A holistic agenda](#). 2018. Page 18.

<sup>260</sup> IACHR. [Women Journalists and Freedom of Expression: Discrimination and gender-based faced by women journalists in the exercise of their profession](#). OEA/SER.L/V/II IACHR/RELE/INF.20/18. 2018. Para. 176 subparagraph c).

<sup>261</sup> Sentiido Foundation and Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision. [Implementación del Cap. I de la Plataforma de Beijing: mujeres, medios y comunicación en Colombia 2020](#). 2020.

<sup>262</sup> ILO. [Empowering Women at Work – Company Policies and Practices for Gender Equality](#). 2020. Page 34.

<sup>263</sup> Inter American Press Association, Resolution on Violence against women journalists, adopted in the framework of the mid-year meeting of the Inter American Press Association, April 21-23, 2021.

relation to their commitment to creating of a work environment free from all forms of gender-based violence. In this regard, the ILO has highlighted that when people in leadership positions adequately and seriously address sexual harassment and assign high priority to preventing its occurrence, they contribute to creating an organizational culture that rejects these practices and encourages women to denounce them.<sup>264</sup>

3. *Minimum contents of the internal policy for the prevention and approach of gender-based violence:* the policies implemented by the companies must define what is meant by gender-based violence in the workplace and provide examples of the different modalities of this violence. Appropriate and effective sanctions must be provided for people who commit these acts<sup>265</sup> and adequate prevention and assistance measures must be contemplated for people who experience them, including psychological assistance, and counseling on the options available to them in terms of reporting.<sup>266</sup>
4. The ILO has indicated that the internal procedures for reporting, investigating and punishing acts of gender-based violence, including acts of violence and/or sexual harassment, must be clearly defined and must be known by all personnel. In the same vein, women journalists and media workers emphasize that "[the] newsrooms must create an internal communication channel so that victims of abuse and harassment can file a formal complaint".<sup>267</sup>
5. Mechanisms must be provided to ensure that complaints are dealt with impartially, with a gender perspective<sup>268</sup> and in a transparent manner. Similarly, strategies should be developed to ensure the privacy of the person making the complaint and protect them from retaliation.
6. *Space responsible for dealing with complaints of acts of gender-based violence and discrimination:* women who work in the media consider that the

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<sup>264</sup> ILO. [Empowering Women at Work – Company Policies and Practices for Gender Equality](#). 2020. Page 34.

<sup>265</sup> Ross, Karen. A hard ladder to climb: women and power in media industries. In World Association for Christian Communication - WACC, [Media Development 1/2018. Gender and Media—A holistic agenda](#). 2018. Page 18.

<sup>266</sup> ILO. [Empowering Women at Work – Company Policies and Practices for Gender Equality](#). 2020. Page 34.

<sup>267</sup> Brazilian Association of Investigative Journalism and Gender and Number. [Mulheres no Jornalismo Brasileiro](#). 2017. Page 25.

<sup>268</sup> "The IACHR has understood the gender perspective as a concept that makes visible the position of inequality and structural subordination of women and girls to men, due to their gender, and as a key tool to combat discrimination and violence against women, as well as against people with sexual and gender diversity". IACHR. [Violence and discrimination against women and girls: Good practices and challenges in Latin America and the Caribbean](#). OEA/Ser.L/V/II. Doc. 233 November 14, 2019, Para. 8.

handling of complaints should be in charge of gender offices and other areas specifically devoted to the prevention and handling of gender-based violence.<sup>269</sup> They also understand that the work of these offices must be governed by protocols and/or action guides that provide predictability and transparency to their work.<sup>270</sup> In the same vein, the Inter-American Press Association has urged journalistic companies to "improve protocols against workplace sexual harassment".<sup>271</sup>

7. *Monitoring and evaluation:* the need for the media to carry out "periodic diagnoses of gender-based violence that occurs within the media and in the journalistic exercise on and off the Internet" has been emphasized. In the same way, it is fundamental to permanently and participatively monitor the effectiveness of the internal policy for the prevention and approach of gender-based violence.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>269</sup> Chaher, Sandra; Pedraza, Virginia (Coord.). [Organizaciones de medios y género : igualdad de oportunidades para mujeres y personas LGTTBIO+ en empresas, sindicatos y universidades](#). FUNDEPS and Communication Civil Association for Equality. 2018. Page 166.

<sup>270</sup> Uchile newspaper. [Periodistas se manifiestan en rechazo a acoso sexual sufrido por reportera](#). September 23, 2019.

<sup>271</sup> Inter American Press Association, Resolution on Violence against women journalists, adopted in the framework of the mid-year meeting of the Inter American Press Association, April 21-23, 2021.

<sup>272</sup> Fabiola Calvo Ocampo, Amalia Toledo Hernández, Grace Montserrat Torrente Rodríguez. [Periodistas sin acoso: Violencias machistas contra periodistas y comunicadoras](#). Colombian Network of Journalists with a Gender Vision and Karisma Foundation. March 2021. Page 7.