Children
in the News
News
Seen but still not heard

Children & Media: Championing Best Practice

Editors: Ayabulela Poro and Carol Mohlala
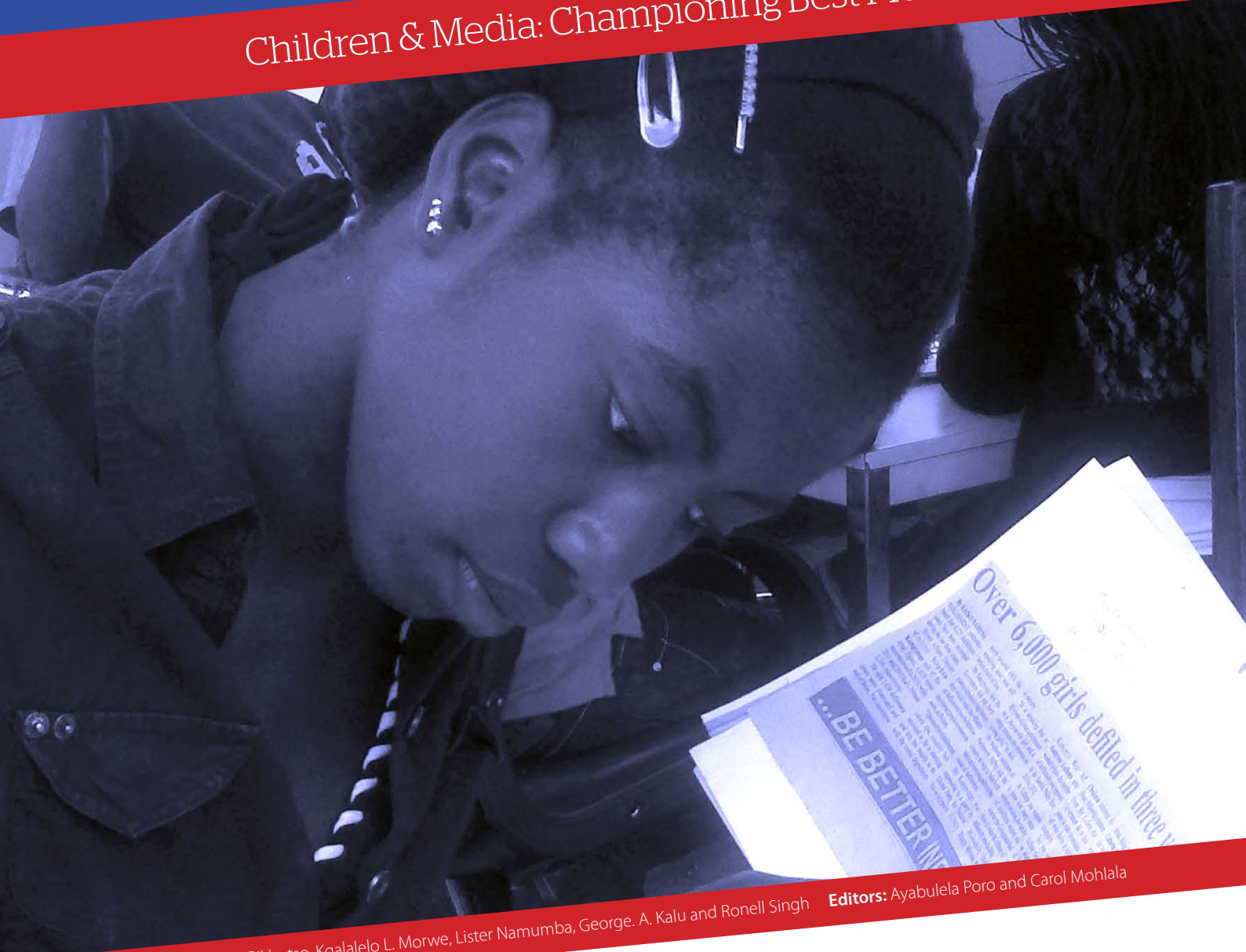
Authors: Musa O. Rikhotso, Kgalalelo L. Morwe, Lister Namumba, George. A. Kalu and Ronell Singh

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Abbreviations

ACRWC: African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child
EC: European Commission
MMA: Media Monitoring Africa
MNCRD: Media Network for Child Rights and Development
SABC: South African Broadcasting Corporation
SIDA: Swedish International Development Agency
UNCRC: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
ZNBC: Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation
GBV: Gender-based violence

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1 Introduction

South Africa and Zambia have ratified both the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC).[1] By virtue of being signatories to these conventions, both countries have the responsibility to ensure the realisation of children's rights and to act in their best interests. Chiefly amongst these rights is that for children to be given the opportunity to participate and be heard on issues and decisions affecting them including those that are reported on in the media.

The realisation of these rights has been met with many challenges. At most when children are given the opportunity to participate, this tends to be done in a tokenistic and inauthentic manner, and in worse situations children are not given the opportunity to participate at all, as if the old adage were true that they should be seen and not heard. If we are to realise the meaningful and ethical participation of children, critical steps need to be taken and working with the media is one of the most crucial in this process. Given its capacity to reach diverse audiences and to influence people's attitudes and behaviours, the media can play a key role in promoting and fulfilling children's rights.

It is against this backdrop that this report has been written to primarily analyse the portrayal of children in the media and to establish to what degree the media are playing a fundamental role in promoting and protecting children's rights. Thus, MMA and MNCRD have been monitoring the coverage of children in the media, since 2011 to gauge whether the media promotes and protects children's rights to participation, freedom of expression, privacy and dignity. Analysing how media report on children has been a pivotal tool through which we have been able to identify both South African and Zambian media's successes and shortcomings when it comes to reporting on children. This has further enabled us to use the findings from the media monitoring (conducted by adult and child media monitors) as a solid basis for providing media practitioners with tangible trends on reporting on children and accompanying steps that can be implemented to make improved, ethical decisions in this regard.

With that said, this report seeks not to paint a grim picture of how children are portrayed in the media but to awaken the media's realisation of children and their rights. More so, the report hopes to inspire the media to assume their role as platforms for promoting children's participation and creating awareness around the protection and fulfilment of their rights in general. For these purposes, MMA and MNCRD analysed the coverage of children by 18 South African and 10 Zambian media across print, radio and television. The research data was collected over a period of five months[2] in the year 2013.

This report is divided into six sections, the first of which is this introduction. Section Two provides a summary of the key findings from the data scrutinised. This is followed by Section Three, which will provide the objectives of the research and guidelines on reporting on children. The section will continue to detail the methods used to gather and analyse the data for the study. Section Four and Section Five reveal the research findings of the South African and Zambian media respectively. It looks at both the quantity and quality of the stories, where the stories originated from, how children were sourced for stories, and which topics did children appear in the most. It should be noted that over the years the presentation of the results has been improved.

Some of the results were not included in 2011 but were in 2012. Therefore comparisons will be made to 2011 and when necessary 2012 to highlight the changes that could have occurred over the years. Section Six contains the conclusions and recommendations, based on the findings.

2 Key findings

Children continue to be underrepresented in mainstream news media in both South Africa and Zambia. While there was a noticeable increase in the number of stories featuring children, these only constituted 6 791 of 68 687 (10%) of the total average number of news content in South Africa, an increase from eight percent in 2011. Of the total of 9859 news stories which appeared in the monitored media in Zambia, children only made up 530 (5%) of this content. It is concerning to note that this is a decrease from 10% in 2011.

Other findings reveal:

• In South Africa, e.tv had the highest average number of children's stories at 22 percent while in Zambia Muvi TV ranked first with 16 percent.

• In terms of media performance, the Daily Sun and Zambia Daily Mail were rated the best in the overall rating in South Africa and Zambia respectively.

• South African media violated children's rights in four percent of cases whilst in Zambia this figure stood at one percent.

• Children hardly had an identity or voice as they were rarely accessed (quoted directly or indirectly) or named in both South African and Zambian media.

• Children still occupied limited and stereotypical roles in the media in both countries. In South Africa children were mostly portrayed as

1. Both conventions advocate for children's rights and welfare.

2. The period for data collection was left to the discretion of the organisation.

"just a child" and the most assigned role in Zambia was "victim".

• Boys and girls are almost equally represented in South African media respectively receiving 48 and 52 percent of the coverage. In Zambia, the representation of both genders is unequal with boys receiving less coverage at 40 percent and girls receiving more of the coverage at 60 percent.

• Stories on education received the most coverage in South Africa at 17 percent and child abuse was the most prominent topic in Zambia at 23 percent.

• Print and broadcast media differed in the kind of attention they paid to children's stories during the monitoring period. Most children's stories appeared on page five in South African newspapers and usually made it to the first items in news bulletins on television. In Zambia most stories appeared on page 3 in newspapers and frequently appeared as the first and third items in news bulletins on television and radio respectively.

• Children continued to occupy negative roles such as "victim" in stories monitored by child monitors in both countries.

• Child media monitors from both countries mostly feel "mad" and "angry" about the way media represent them.

3 Research objectives and methodology

This section outlines the research objectives, how it was carried out including the gathering and analysis of data, the names of media that were monitored and the ethical guidelines on reporting on children which informed the monitoring. The section ends with a discussion on the limitations of the project.

3.1 Research objectives

The project aims to improve the portrayal and active participation of children in the news. In striving to attain this goal, MMA developed the Empowering Children and the Media (ECM) strategy. ECM adopt a child-participation centred approach, which includes five components, namely, the Children's Media Monitoring Project, The Children's News Agency, The Wits University Course for journalists, the Make Abuse Disappear Online Accountability Tool (MAD OAT) and the Adult Media Monitoring Project. These components work together in order to improve how children are represented in the news.

The research is a significant part of the ECM project and aims to analyse media content and highlight media's performance in reporting on children. The following questions were considered:

• How do media portray children generally?
• Are children given a voice and if so what percentage of stories achieved this result?
• How does the portrayal of girls and boys compare?
• What roles were frequently assigned to children in the media?
• What age groups were frequently accessed in the media?
• Which geographical areas dominated media's coverage of children and their issues?
• Which topics were frequently covered by the media with regards to children?
• Which race is represented the most in media coverage of children?

The following Guidelines and Principles for Reporting on Children in the Media were used to assess how children were represented in the stories monitored.[3]

3.2 Guidelines on reporting on children

This section focuses on the guidelines developed by MMA to assist journalists and media practitioners to produce better quality reporting on children, with the understanding that respecting children's rights today will mean respect for people's rights in the future. Although there are no established universally agreed-upon standards for reporting on children, the editorial guidelines fall in line with common practices and principles for protecting children's rights in media. Below are the principles for reporting on children:

1. Even where you are trying to tell people about harm to children or another children's issue or promote children's rights, you always need to respect the best interests of the individual child. The best interests of each child are to be protected over any other consideration, including over advocacy for children's issues and the promotion of children's rights.

3. The term 'monitor' is used to indicate the extraction and analysis of data from individual news items.

2. Always respect children's dignity and well-being. The dignity and rights of every child are to be respected in every circumstance.

3. When interviewing children, respect their privacy and confidentiality and make sure you protect them from harm and potential consequences. In interviewing and reporting on children, special attention is to be paid to their right to privacy and confidentiality, to participate in decisions affecting them, and to be protected from harm and retribution, even potential harm and retribution. A child should always be interviewed in a safe, comfortable and non-threatening environment. If the child does not want to be a part of the interview, his/her wishes should be respected. A child should be afforded enough time to think about whether he/she wants a story to be published or not.

4. Children have a right to have their views heard on matters that affect them, so try and include them. When trying to determine the best interests of children, the children's right to have their views taken into account is to be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity.

5. When writing a story on children ask those who know or work with them, or are experts on the issue, about the potential consequences of telling their story. Those closest to the child and best able to assess a child's situation are to be consulted about the diverse ramifications, including potential political, social and cultural ramifications of any reportage.

6. Always hide a child's identity where the child might be at risk. No stories or images will be published that might put the child, siblings or peers at risk even when identities are changed, obscured or not used. When it is editorially necessary to publish a picture of a child that is potentially harmful to that child, the identity of the child shall be obscured in such a manner that the child cannot be recognised.[4]

7. Children involved in legal proceedings need even more protection, and are at greater risk so make sure to always protect their identity. In all stories in which a child has been involved in a crime, either as a witness, victim or perpetrator, unless exceptional circumstances prevail and then only if there is informed consent from the child involved and the child's caregiver, the child's identity will not be revealed either directly or indirectly.

8. If you want to name or show a child, make sure you are allowed to do so by law, that you have informed consent from both the child and caregiver and that you still protect them from potential harm. Whenever the identity of a child is disclosed, whether pictorially or in print:

• *The statutory restrictions on the naming or identification of a child shall be observed and adhered to;*
• *The informed consent of the child and caregiver[5] of any child shall be sought in all cases;*
• *Even if a child's caregiver consents to disclosure of the identity of a child, a journalist must exercise a cautious discretion, as it may nevertheless be harmful to the child to publish the identity of the child.*

9. Make sure to protect a child's HIV status. If in doubt leave it out. To prevent harm and possible stigmatisation, a child's HIV status will not be revealed directly or indirectly, unless there are exceptional circumstances, and informed consent (from both the child and caregiver) has been attained. If in doubt, this information shall be left out.

10. Challenge negative stereotypes about children and conventional roles children occupy in the media (e.g. helpless victims[6]) whenever you can. Negative stereotypes about children based on race, gender, class, culture, and/or sexual orientation are particularly harmful for children and will be challenged where possible. Children's achievements will also be given due recognition in the media.

11. Treat girls and boys the same in your stories, with equal care, dignity and respect. Girl and boy children have equal rights and gender-based stereotypes will not be perpetuated when reporting on children.

12. When doing a story on a vulnerable child make sure to be extra careful. Where a child's circumstances makes him/her especially vulnerable (e.g. due to poverty, homelessness, a parent or sibling's HIV status, being an orphan, child soldier or refugee[7]) journalists must demonstrate extreme care to ensure their reporting does not cause further harm, trauma, distress, humiliation, embarrassment, grief or expose them to danger. The child should only be identified when informed consent has been given by the child and caregiver, and it is demonstrably in the child's best interest to do so. Otherwise the child's identity should be protected. In all cases reporting must be carried out in a manner consistent with the child's best interests.

13. Do not portray children in a sexual manner. Journalists must not use sexualised images of children.

14. Do not make promises you cannot keep and don't bribe children for your story. A journalist must never abuse his/her position of power, especially when it comes to accessing or reporting on children. Journalists must never bribe a child with money, goods or promises of help or improved circumstances, in order to obtain information or secure consent. To do so is a gross abuse of power, is highly unethical and negates consent.

It is with these principles in mind that the South African and Zambian media content was examined and the methodology developed.

3.3 Media Analysed

A content analysis method was applied in gathering the information. This process allowed MMA to extract data and allowed for general trends in the coverage to be analysed. The nature of the data extracted is explained later in this section.

In South Africa, a total of 14 newspapers and two television stations were analysed in 2011. The Cape Argus and Cape Times were added to the list in 2012 after journalists from these titles had undergone Editorial Guidelines training, resulting in a total number of 18 media analysed by the end of the monitoring period in 2013. Table 1 shows the media analysed in South Africa and their type and frequency of publication/broadcast.

Table 1: Media analysed in South Africa

Medium	Type	Frequency of Publication/ Broadcast
Business Day	Newspaper	Daily
Cape Argus	Newspaper	Daily
Cape Times	Newspaper	Daily
City Press	Newspaper	Weekly
Daily Sun	Newspaper	Daily
e.tv	Television	Daily
Mail & Guardian	Newspaper	Weekly
SABC3	Newspaper	Daily
Saturday Star	Newspaper	Weekly
Sowetan	Newspaper	Daily
Sunday Sun	Newspaper	Weekly
Sunday Times	Newspaper	Weekly
Sunday World	Newspaper	Weekly
The Citizen	Newspaper	Daily
The New Age	Newspaper	Daily
The Star	Newspaper	Daily
The Sunday Independent	Newspaper	Weekly
The Times	Newspaper	Daily

Most of the major daily and weekly privately-owned English newspapers in the country were analysed. Aside from the Cape Argus and Cape Times, most of the media are widely available across the country. e.tv, a free-to-air television station, and SABC 3, a commercial station of the country's public broadcaster, were also included in the sample. Both e.tv and SABC3 broadcast nationally and are therefore easily accessible to many South Africans.

For Zambia, the media analysed were state and privately owned. These included radio, television and newspapers. Hot Fm was added to the list in 2012 to replace UNZA radio which was not consistent with its news bulletin broadcasts. Table 2 shows the media analysed in Zambia.

Table 2: Media analysed in Zambia

Medium	Type	Frequency of Publication/ Broadcast
Hot FM	Radio	Daily
Muvi FM	Television	Daily
Q FM	Radio	Daily
Radio Christian Voice	Radio	Daily
Radio Phoenix	Radio	Daily
The Post Newspaper	Newspaper	Daily
Times of Zambia	Newspaper	Daily
Zambia Daily Mail	Newspaper	Daily
ZNBC TV	Television	Daily
ZNBC TV2	Television	Daily

The content analysed was gathered by both MMA and MNRCD over a period[8] of five months in 2013. For radio and television, primetime news bulletins were analysed each day. Adverts on radio and television were excluded. For print media, news reports with the exception of advertising and paid-for content, sports results, educational supplements, and letters to the editor, film/book reviews and television programming guides were analysed.

The content was manually collected by people (hereafter monitors) trained to examine and extract data from all stories or pictures that were clearly about children (defined as any individual under the age of 18).[9]

The quality and accuracy of monitoring submitted was checked by project managers in South Africa and Zambia on a daily basis. The completed monitoring was then captured into a specially designed database.

For each child-related story, the following information was captured:

Item/page number: Each item was numbered in relation to where it occurred in a news bulletin or page in the newspaper. The position of a story in a newspaper s an indicator of the importance attributed to an issue, as front page stories or opinion, analysis, or editorial pages indicate greater importance ascribed to the issue by the newspaper.

Likewise, the order of items on television or radio bulletins shows the relative emphasis given by the station.

Summary: A brief summary of each child-related story or item was provided. The summary reflects the gist of the story.

Type of story: For television and radio, monitors recorded different types of stories such as news, sports and business. For print, monitors recorded different types of stories such as news, briefs, editorial, opinion, cartoon and photographs. The type of story is an indicator of editorial commitment to the issue, with editorials indicating greater commitment than say news stories.

Topic: The overall topic or central subject of each item was captured using a set list.. Monitors were obliged to choose the most specific and most appropriate code for the item being monitored. Only one topic code for each item was permitted. The more general topic codes were utilised only as a matter of last resort in those few instances where an item could not be categorised as falling into one of the more specific topic areas. Through topics, we were able to see the issues media cover about children.

Origin: The geographic area in which the stories originated was recorded. Capturing the origins of the stories gave a broad indication of the journalistic selection biases. In other words, it gave an indication of the areas the media tended to cover when it came to stories related to children.

Author: The authorship of an item/story, for instance a journalist, an agency, a combination of these or a guest writer, was captured. Where possible, the sex of the author was also captured. This enabled MMA to determine whether most stories were sourced externally from agencies or the media commissioned their own journalists to covering issues related to children, which also partly an indicator of editorial commitment to the issue.

Sources: Children were captured as sources when directly or indirectly accessed (or quoted), named, photographed and made reference to either by age or mention. On the other hand, adults were only regarded as sources when directly or indirectly accessed. Where clear, further information about the sex of the child source and the role of the adult sources, who were accessed in the story, was also categorised. Sources in stories gave an important indication who was speaking and could also allow for the analysis of how frequently adults and children were sourced.

Children's rights: An overall assessment was conducted on whether headlines, images and the contents of the stories were in the best interests of the child/children. Monitors chose "yes" when these were clearly in the best interests of the children in the story and "no" in cases where they were not. "Not clear" was chosen when monitors were unsure or the other two options were not applicable.[10]

Quality of information: Ideally, a good news story should give more detail than the bare facts of the event or a particular issue. It should accurately set the context, show the implications of the course of events and how a particular issue or event might impact society at large. To determine the quality of information provided in the news items, monitors recorded whether items provided a basic context and/or in-depth context. In addition, monitors noted whether items discussed relevant legislation or policy, provided self-help boxes or information, and whether the stories were in the child/children's best interests.[11]

Ethical Principles: The Editorial Guidelines and Principles for Reporting on Children in the Media (refer to 3.2) were used to assess how children were represented in the stories monitored.

8. The period for data collection was left to the discretion of the organisation.   9. A child, according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), is a person under the age of 18.

10.For the criteria used to assess whether children's rights were respected or not, See Appendix 1   11. For the Quality of Information criteria, See Appendix 2

Analysing the news involves considering a range of different elements, and assessing them individually as well as a whole. In analysing media content for this report, around 40 different elements such as the number of stories, adherence to ethical guidelines and children's voices were included. Often, understanding performance of media requires in-depth news analysis and additional time in bringing all elements together.

Given the complexity of the elements included in the analysis of news content, one of the most valuable ways to easily assess media performance is through a rating system. Over the years MMA has refined its rating system for news media analysis. For this study, MMA implemented a rating system that aimed to give quick and easy access to understanding the performance of the media analysed.Not only does MMA's Media Rating System (MRS) provide clear indicators as to how each medium performed, it also enables healthy competition to be developed between newsrooms as to who performed better. In addition, due to the intricate nature of news analysis, the ratings have been divided into five categories. The first four address key issues in reporting, outlined below, while the fifth gives an overall score.

The four key areas and overall rating used to rate media performance are as follows:

• Voices heard: Was the reporting credible and well sourced, or who was in the news?

Here information about who spoke in each of the news items was captured. In particular, the overall diversity or spread of sources was analysed. This was done through comparing the spread of sources against each of the other media analysed. The operating assumption was that a greater diversity of sources would lead to more informative and better news.

The sex of sources was also determined. This provided a valuable indicator as to how many female and male voices were seen and heard. The assumption was that given the fundamental inequality that exists in the representation of sexes in the media, having a greater number of female voices is to be encouraged to help address inequality.

• Rights respected: Did journalists follow recognised and accepted ethical standards, or how ethical was the coverage?

Using locally and internationally accepted journalistic principles, news items were assessed in terms of whether they clearly violated or clearly supported any of the ethical guidelines. The assumption was that ethical reporting is essential if the media are to fulfil their mandate.

Fairness was also determined. Using an established methodology each item was assessed in terms of whether it clearly favoured or clearly disfavoured a person or group. The assumption here was that fair and balanced news is essential to good journalism and any clear pattern of unfair or biased reporting suggests an ethical failure by a particular media.

News items were also analysed to see the extent to which they promoted and/or respected human rights as well as how often they challenged stereotypes. Here each story was assessed in terms of whether any stereotypes were clearly supported or clearly challenged. The assumption was that media have a great responsibility to challenge negative stereotypes and promote a culture of tolerance and respect for human rights.

• Diversity of coverage: Did media cover diverse key events and issues, or which events were covered?

Topics covered: Here the spread of topics covered as compared to other media was assessed. At the same time, the focus by media on a topic or set of topics was also analysed. The assumption was that a diverse range of topics in the news provides better access to information to audiences who are diverse and have diverse needs. Diversity of region: Each media was assessed on the basis of the spread of the region where the stories originated from as well as a focus on a particular region. Thus a regional-based medium may have a focus on a particular area. The operating assumption here was that a diversity of origin will result in more diverse news.

Prominence of key events and issues: Media scored more highly if human rights-focused items or events from under-serviced and under-covered areas were afforded prominent coverage.

• Depth of information: What information was provided in the coverage?

Specific information types: Each news story was assessed in terms of what type of information it provided. Five different types were included: issues raised, causes, background information (context), relevant legislation as well as solutions are all important elements to be considered. The assumption here was that these five types of information are critical to quality news reporting that goes beyond reporting facts about an event.

Number of information types: Media scored highly for those stories that contained more types of information, therefore likely to provide more informative news.

• Overall ranking

At the end of analysis the overall ranking was applied to get the best-performing medium. All the above criteria were considered.

3.6 Children's monitoring methodology and schools involved

In South Africa, child monitors from four schools in grades six and seven participated in the project, while in Zambia child monitors in grades six, seven, eight and nine from five schools participated in the project. The schools were selected to include children from the lower, middle and upper income communities. While the work done by the children in this project may be empirical, it is a key part of the strategy of the project to get children reading news and also participating and engaging with media practitioners on how they portray them in the media.

In South Africa, schools were selected to include children from various socio-economic backgrounds and different races, and were situated in two provinces in the country.

• *Naturena Primary School in Johannesburg.*
• *Park Senior Primary School in Turffontein, Johannesburg.*
• *Troyeville Primary School in Bertrams/Bez Valley, Johannesburg.*
• *Pelican Park Primary School in Grassy Park, Cape Town.*

Eighty children took part in the monitoring of eight newspapers, with monitors from each school focusing on two newspapers.

• *The New Age and The Citizen were monitored by Naturena Primary.*
• *The Sowetan and The Times were monitored by Park Senior Primary.*
• *The Daily Sun and The Star were monitored by Troyeville Primary.*
• *The Cape Argus and Cape Times were monitored by Pelican Park Primary.*

For Zambia, the following schools participated:

• *Chibelo Primary School.*
• *Chisengalumbwe Primary School.*
• *Jacaranda Primary School.*
• *Kabulonga Primary School.*
• *Northmead Secondary School.*

Eighty two children monitored the media. The media monitored by children in Zambia were the same as those monitored by adults and they included:

1. The Post newspaper.
2. ZNBC TV.
3. Muvi TV.
4. Times of Zambia newspaper.
5. ZNBC TV2.
6. Hot FM.
7. Radio Christian Voice.
8. Zambia Daily Mail newspaper.
9. Radio Phoenix.
10. Q FM.

The monitors were trained to analyse stories on children and to judge whether journalists were able to report in a way that did not violate their rights. The child monitors were then provided with monitoring userguides and monitoring books. The former were used to provide tips and reminders on things such as the dos and don'ts of media monitoring and how best to monitor a news story, read images as well as definitions of words frequently used in media monitoring. The monitoring book on the other hand contained multiple forms for children to complete while reading their specific newspapers. These monitoring books helped the children to determine the quality of news reporting.

All the monitoring books given to the children were collected in 2013 and the data was fed into an MS Access Database. The stories monitored by children from Zambia were 181, and 776 by South African children. Methodology for monitoring by children Media monitoring done by the children is more simplified than the adult monitoring. The methodology is mainly driven by children's opinions and broadly based on five key areas of media analysis: Topics, Role, Gender, quality of reporting and general feelings towards the news reporting and children in the story.

Topics: *Children are expected to identify the most relevant topics for the story they are reading. The workbook contains a list of 28 topics of which they have to select one or more topics for every story they are analysing.*

Roles: *Contained in their workbook is another smaller table of 15 roles. These are most common roles associated to children who are covered in the media. Child monitors consider each child in the story and they have to make a decision on what role the children are playing in the story and then choose all the relevant roles listed in the table for that particular news story.*

Count of boys and girls:

For media monitors it is also important for them to count how many boys and girls are present in each story. In the long run this counting exercise will reveal the extent to which boys and girls are given equal attention by the media.

Quality of reporting: *The methodology has various questions that assist children to judge the quality of reporting on each news story. The children are asked question such as:*

• *Did you like the headline? Why?*
• *Did you like the pictures? Why?*
• *Was the story well reported or baldly reported? Explain.*
• *What would you do differently?*
• *What (media) rights were violated or promoted in the story? By media rights we refer to the right to participation, dignity, privacy and freedom of speech*

Glad/Mad/ Sad: *Because children have strong emotions it is appropriate that the methodology allows for them to express how they feel about the news reporting as well as how they feel towards the children in the stories. Although this section allows us to determine how children felt about how journalists reported on them, it should be noted that this data is also a combination of how they felt in relation to the content in news stories.*

3.7 Research limitations

There were a number of limitations to the research. Only major publications based in metropolitan areas in South Africa and Zambia were monitored. These are Johannesburg, Cape Town and Lusaka.

Data was also unavailable for certain publications and broadcast stations in 2011 as these were only monitored in 2012 and 2013. Therefore, comparative analyses cannot be provided for these media.

Comparing very different media also has its limitations especially when considering diverse audiences and resources available to different newsrooms.

Monitoring biases and human error could not be completely ruled out although MMA and MNCRD ensured consistent standardisation and quality control of data.

4 South African background

South Africa has an estimated population of 52 million people,[12] of whom 40 percent are children.[13] This suggests that children make up a considerable portion of the country's population. It is this population that bears the brunt of many challenges that South Africa is facing. Among these challenges, poverty and child abuse stand out. According to a review report undertaken by the South African Human Rights Commission and Unicef, some 11.9 million children (64 per cent of all children) live in poverty.[14]

Likewise, child abuse is a cause of concern in South Africa. According to Unicef "South Africa's levels of violence against children are among the highest in the world. Tens of thousands of children are victims of abuse, neglect and exploitation every year – and offenders often go unpunished." [15] It remains a challenge for South Africa to address child abuse and other crimes against children despite having laws and policies to protect them.

The media's role in all this is an essential one and should not be overlooked especially in acting as a channel that educating and inspiring public reactions to the state of affairs in which children find themselves. Thus, the media's coverage of children and their issues has the capacity to adequately inform society, and encourage response to the challenges that children in South Africa are confronted with.

It is therefore also of importance to gauge how, in light of these challenges encountered by children in South Africa, the media reports on children and the issues that affect them. The following section will discuss the South African findings.

4.1 South African findings

Over the years, MMA has seen an increase in the number of news stories about children in South African media. In 2011 children only appeared in 4 676 of 56721 (8%) of all monitored news stories while in 2013 this number increased to 6 791 of 68 687 (10%). While this slight increase can be attributed to the additional number of media monitored by MMA since 2011, it can also be viewed as a sign that children's issues are receiving additional but minimal coverage in the news.

Such stories which dominated news coverage since the beginning of the monitoring period include the textbook crisis. This was met by national outcry following reports on the failure by the Department of Education to deliver textbooks to students in various parts of the country and follow-up stories on this issue.

The hospitalisation of Nelson Mandela would have also seen an increase in the number of stories featuring children as they were often interviewed during this period as they delivered well-wishes during this event to the ailing statesman who has since departed.

It remains a challenge that only a small percentage of news stories have a clear focus on issues involving children. When taking a closer look at these stories, it can be revealed that only 3 173 (5%) of the total number of stories had children as their central focus. This section will firstly look at the South African background and will then discuss the adult and child media monitoring findings.

4.1.1 Adult media monitoring

In the past three years, the media in South Africa were monitored by trained adult and child media monitors to determine how children are represented and portrayed. This section will compare the 2011 findings from the media monitoring by adults with those from 2013 to determine whether there has been any improvement in the media's coverage of children. The findings from the media monitoring by children will be revealed in a later sections of the report.

4.1.1.1 Performance rating

MMA's Media Rating System (MRS) was applied in assessing media's performance suchas the number of children's stories covered by the media, the voices amplified in the media and other elements. As highlighted in the methodology section, due to the intricate nature of news analysis, the ratings were divided into five categories, namely: Rights Respected, Voices Heard, Depth of Information, Diversity of Coverage and Overall Rating. The first four rating categories were combined to give the overall rating. Table 3 shows the four rating categories and the overall ranking results.

Table 3: Performance rating

Medium	Ranking				
	Rights Respected	Voices Heard	Issues in Depth	Diversity	Overall Rating
Daily Sun	1	3	3	4	1
The Star	4	5	6	3	2
The New Age	6	15	5	1	3
Sowetan	8	7	2	6	4
Saturday Star	7	1	14	7	5
The Citizen	5	12	10	2	6
City Press	3	9	9	11	7
e-tv	12	2	4	10	8
The Times	2	10	15	9	9
Cape Argus	9	6	12	8	10
Cape Times	11	11	7	5	11
SABC3	13	4	1	13	12
Sunday Times	10	8	11	12	13
Mail & Guardian	14	14	8	17	14
Sunday World	15	17	13	16	15
Sunday Sun	17	16	17	15	16
The Sunday Independent	16	13	18	18	17
Business Day	18	18	16	14	18

Daily Sun was rated first out of all media monitored in South Africa. The newspaper continued to hold the position for two consecutive years performing particularly well in respecting the rights of children in its coverage, accessing them and providing in-depth information on their issues. Meanwhile, Business Day was rated last. This could be attributed to the fact that it is a business-orientated newspaper; therefore unlikely to cover many stories involving children and consequently having few stories with a focus on children's issues.

4.1.1.2 Number of children's stories

> "The media should focus on children because they are our next generation and if they don't care about children it means that they don't care about the future." **Uafhulufhedzea Netsianda, child media monitior in Grade 7 at Naturena Primary.**

The number of children's stories per medium helps us gauge how much attention is given to children and their issues by individual news outlets. While MMA notes a general but slight increase in the coverage of children by the monitored media, it should be noted that this is a drop in the ocean and does little to change the visibility of children in mainstream media.

Children account for 39 percent[16] of South Africa's population. Despite being the largest segment of society, their issues are not adequately reflected in the news. Table 4 shows how the monitored media performed when it came to giving space to the coverage of children.

Table 4: Number of children stories

Medium	2011	2013
e-tv	34%	22%
Saturday Star	13%	17%
The New Age	10%	17%
The Star	5%	12%
Daily Sun	12%	12%
SABC 3	43%	11%
The Times	13%	9%
Sunday Sun	7%	9%
Mail & Guardian	10%	9%
Sunday Times	6%	9%
Sunday World	7%	8%
The Citizen	6%	7%
Sowetan	9%	7%
Cape Times	0*	7%
Cape Argus	0*	6%
City Press	7%	6%
The Sunday Independent	5%	5%
Business Day	2%	5%

*Data for the Cape Times and Cape Argus was unavailable in 2011 as monitoring of the newspapers only began in 2012.

Of the 18 mediums monitored, e-tv, The New Age and Saturday Star had the highest percentages of child-related news stories. SABC 3 showed the highest decline (32%) in its coverage, unexpectedly as the station had extended its news bulletins from half an hour to an hour. MMA had hoped the extended broadcasts would divert much needed focus to children and their issues.

The reasons behind the drastic drop are also unclear, although they could partly be attributed to fewer broadcasts of Touching Lives during primetime news. Touching Lives is a social initiative by the SABC aimed at helping people in need and which predominantly features children. While e.tv is the medium with the highest percentage of children's stories at 22 percent it should be noted that this is a significant drop from the 34 percent it scored in 2011 and the reasons are also unclear.

Stories about children in The New Age, Saturday Star and The Star newspapers have increased over the past two years. The representation of children by other newspapers remains relatively unchanged.

These figures reflect how children and their issues are given low priority in the media. Lack of visibility of children in the news could also lead to a society that overlooks children's contributions to matters of national importance. The media should therefore strive to report more on children and issues affecting them.

16. South African Child Gauge 2012 – 2013.

4.1.1.3 Geographical coverage

Coverage of children's stories from different parts of the country shows us whether there is a broad geographic representation of children and their issues in the media. This gives us an indication of the attention afforded to national and provincial news, those from abroad or different provinces in the country. Figure 1 shows where the stories originated.

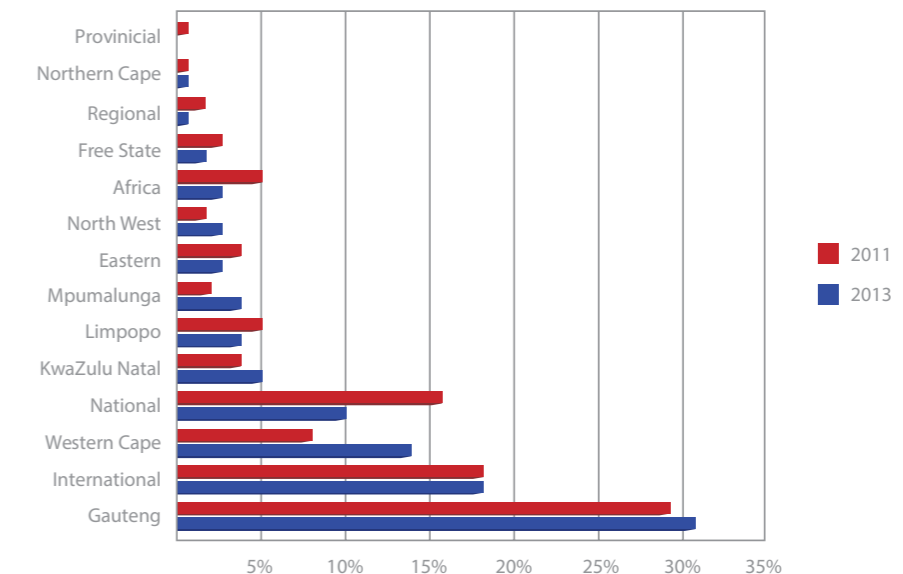**Figure 1: Geographical coverage**

Figure 1 shows that most stories originate from Gauteng, with 18 percent of the coverage, followed by international news (18%) and the Western Cape (14%). The two provinces usually dominate in terms of children's coverage since the monitored media are based in Johannesburg and Cape Town. These are well-developed metropolitan areas which are easily accessible to the media. Interestingly, stories of international origin remain unchanged at 18 percent.

The high percentage of these stories can be attributed to prevalent media coverage of such stories as the trial of George Zimmerman, accused of killing 17-year-old Trayvon Martins. Other stories given considerable coverage were the birth of the British royal baby and child activist Malala Yousafzai who spoke on children's rights at the United Nations during the monitoring period.

The Western Cape also saw an increase in stories from eight percent in 2011 to 14 percent in 2013. This can be attributed to the widespread coverage of 17-year-old Anene Booysen's court case. It should be noted that areas outside metropolises continue to be marginalised in the media. This poses a challenge to ensure that issues that beset children in provinces such as the Northern Cape are represented in the media.

4.1.1.4 Most common topic

Analysing which topics frequently appeared in the media helps us determine which issues involving children are considered as newsworthy by the media. These can then be compared with the challenges faced by children on the ground therefore allowing us to measure how these issues are reflected on the media landscape. Figure 2 shows the top 10 topics involving children in the media.
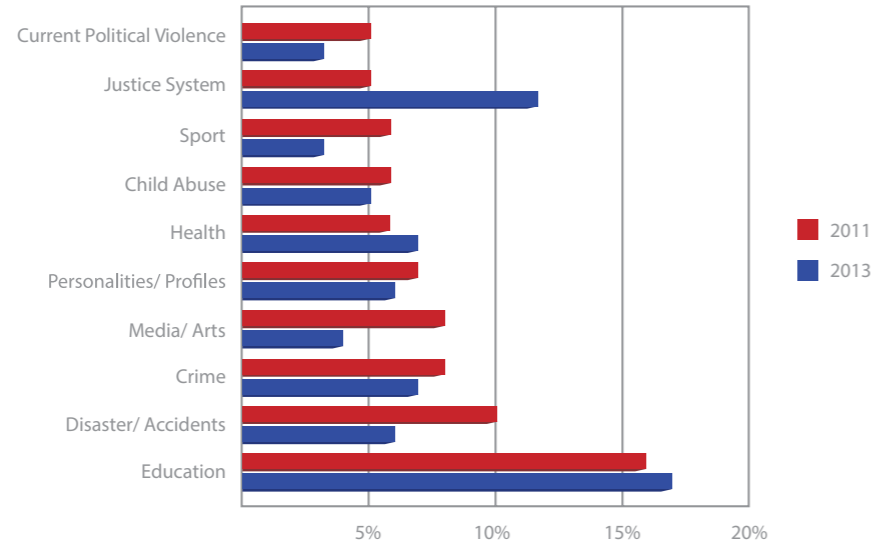
There have been noticeable significant changes in the topic distribution of child-related news stories in the media since 2011. These include a significant increase in stories on the justice system, a drop in media and arts stories, and steady proportions for education, health and child abuse.

According to the findings, stories on the justice system, in other words reports on court cases, rulings, legislation etc, now account for 12 percent whereas they stood at five percent in 2011. A wide number of such stories were covered this year, such as the amendment of the Sexual Offences and Other Related Matters Act, the proposed "Anti-Spanking Bill", the court case of a 14-year-old accused of killing his family with an axe, the child porn ring court case involving a school principal and other accused and the Anene Booysen rape and murder case. It is therefore not surprising that the "Justice System" topic had a dramatic increase since 2011.

17. See Pritchard, D., & Hughes, K.D. 1997, cited in Min, S. J. and Feaster, J. 2008. "Missing Children in News: Racial and Gender Representation of Missing Children Cases in Television News" Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, TBA, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, p.4.
18. See Chermak, S.M. 1995, cited in Min, S. J. and Feaster, J. 2008. "Missing Children in News: Racial and Gender Representation of Missing Children Cases in Television News" Paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, TBA, Montreal, Quebec, Canada, p.4.

Figure 2: Most common topics

Figure 2: Most common topics (horizontal bar chart, 2011 in red and 2013 in blue, x-axis 5% to 20%):
Current Political Violence, Justice System, Sport, Child Abuse, Health, Personalities/ Profiles, Media/ Arts, Crime, Disaster/ Accidents, Education

Pritchard and Hughes (1997) argue that "these stories are typically appraised as high in newsworthiness because crimes against children (who often represent purity and innocence) are rare, morally abhorred, and constitute high deviance". [17] Furthermore, Chermak (1995) holds that "news stories with child victims typically have human interest elements and are likely to elicit viewers' emotions". [18]

In 2011, media and arts (entertainment, lifestyle issues, new media etc) stories accounted for seven percent of news stories involving children, while in 2013 the figure dropped to four percent.
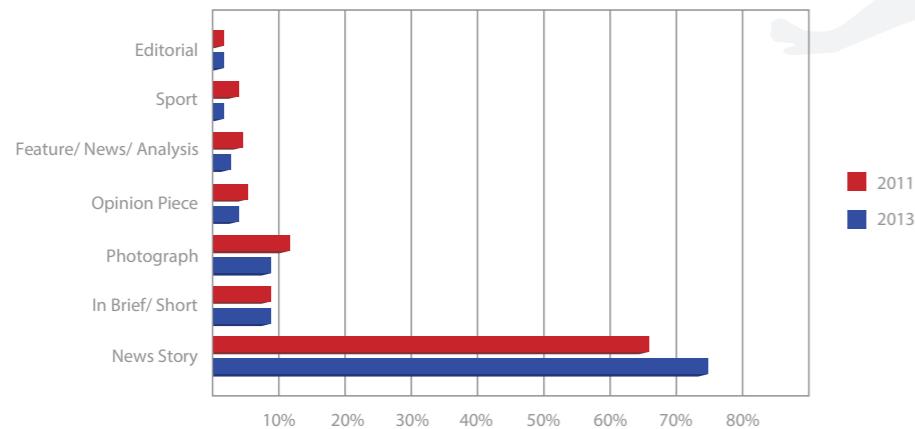
In 2011, education was the most prevalent topic covered by the media. This year, at 17 percent, it still accounts for the largest number of children's stories. Stories that seem to have contributed to this high percentage include coverage the text book delivery saga and the matric trial exams. Health and child abuse remain unchanged at seven and five percent respectively. According to Unicef, "Tens of thousands of children are victims of abuse, neglect and exploitation every year" [19] painting a clear need for media to focus more on this issue affecting children in the country.

> **Thandokazi Mazakatha, a child media monitor in Grade 6 at Naturena Primary adds,**
> "As children we want to see more stories on HIV/AIDS teenage pregnancy and child neglect as these are huge problems affecting our country. Media must create awareness about these issues."

4.1.1.5 Prominence of coverage

The format or styles of journalism in which children's stories are covered, such as news stories, features/news analysis, and the sequence in which stories appear in both news bulletins and newspaper pages help determine the prominence and value given to children and the issues that affect them in media coverage. Figure 3 shows the most frequent formats for children's stories.
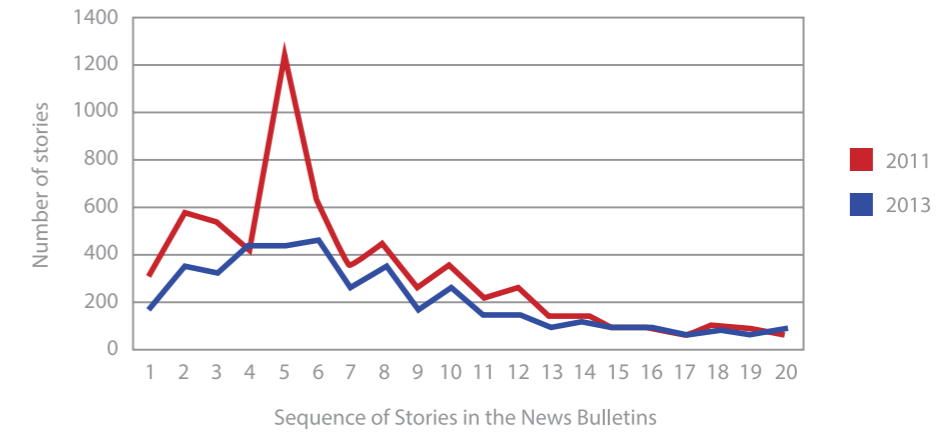
Figure 3: Types of stories in the news

Figure 3: Types of stories in the news (horizontal bar chart, 2011 in red and 2013 in blue, x-axis 10% to 80%):
Editorial, Sport, Feature/ News/ Analysis, Opinion Piece, Photograph, In Brief/ Short, News Story

Children's stories which appeared in the media during the monitoring period were primarily in the news story format (75%). This format is usually event-based reporting and largely factual without much analysis. This indicates that children mostly appear in "breaking news" as well as shorter articles (9%) and photographs (11%) over features/news analysis and editorials. This means that children and their myriad of challenges and issues are not given sufficient attention.

Since formats such as features and news analyses provide opportunities for more nuanced explanations and the unpacking of various issues of national importance, MMA is of the view that there is a need for the media to offer more in-depth coverage and engagement on children's issues. More so, MMA holds that issues usually discussed in these categories are often perceived to be pivotal as they are meant to promote critical thinking, influence public opinion and in some cases influence people and duty-bearers to take action. Thus, if more children appear in these formats, it demonstrates the acknowledgement of their issues as worthy of debate and scrutiny.
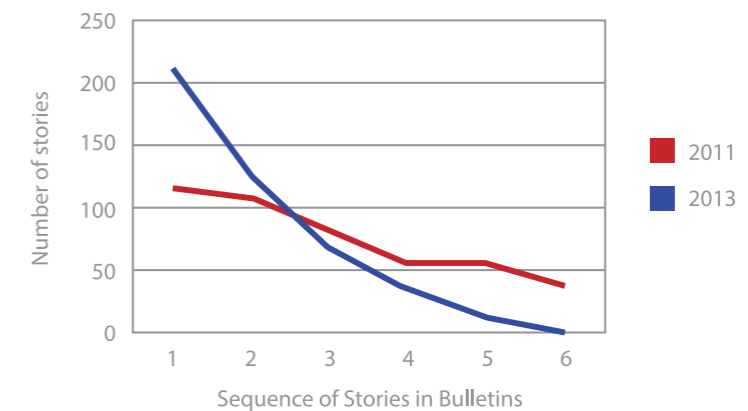
Figure 4: Sequence of appearence in newspapers

Figure 4: Sequence of appearance in newspapers (line chart, 2011 in red and 2013 in blue). Y-axis: Number of stories (0 to 1400). X-axis: Sequence of Stories in the News Bulletins (1 to 20).

When looking at the sequence of appearance of children's stories in the monitored print media, the findings reveal that most stories (over a thousand) were published on page five. This is a sharp contrast to the 2011 findings where most children's stories (just over 400) appeared on page six. This can be attributed to the increase in the number of monitored media and a slight prioritisation of children's stories mostly published on page six in 2011 and on page five during the monitoring period. The assumption here is that, the first few pages of the newspaper play host to more prominent stories, usually formatted as news stories, in other words stories that are mostly factual without much analysis. This speaks to the findings on the prominence of coverage (Figure 3).

In the latter pages of the newspaper where editorials, opinion pieces, or features would usually appear, the findings show that there is a steady drop in the number of children's stories. As noted in our findings on page 21, this shows that children's issues are not receiving in-depth analysis.

Figure 5: Sequence of appearance in bulletins

Figure 5: Sequence of appearance in bulletins (line chart, 2011 in red and 2013 in blue). Y-axis: Number of stories (0 to 250). X-axis: Sequence of Stories in Bulletins (1 to 6).

The findings for the monitored broadcast media show that children's stories mostly appear on the first items of the news bulletins, which should be commended as it reflects the importance afforded to children's issues. While the figure below shows that more prominence was given to children's stories in 2013 by the monitored broadcast media (e.tv and SABC 3), it should be borne in mind that these stories have actually decreased in numbers since 2011. attention. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that media as a disseminator of information plays its role to help address inequality. Hence, MMA finds it necessary to examine how media report on boys and girls. The figure below highlights the spread of coverage between boys and girls as sources.

4.1.1.6 Boys and girls representation in the media

When there are significant differences in the representation of girls and boys in the news, the media run the risk of perpetuating gender inequalities. Therefore, it is crucial to analyse gender representation of children in the media to examine whether there is a bias in how often they appear and the amount of attention given to their issues.

The findings for 2013 indicate that girls and boys are more equally represented than they were in 2011, a sign that media have improved in representing both genders.

Figure 6: Boys and Girls representation in news
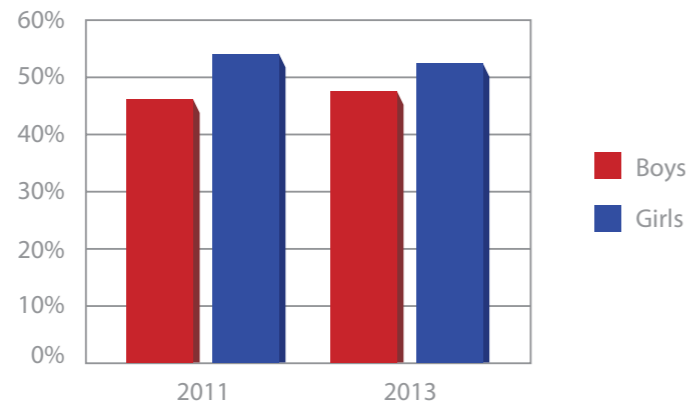
4.1.1.7 Children's roles in the news

> "Media should show us in our different and versatile ways and look at the impact we can make in South Africa."
> **Chinane Ngwedzeni, child media monitor in Grade 6 at Park Senior Primary.**

Just like there is a risk of perpetuating gender inequalities in the media when it comes to the coverage of children, the same is true when considering existing stereotypes about them. If children are consistently and disproportionately placed under certain, and especially negative roles in the news, this can have an impact on society's view of them and their abilities. It is therefore important to examine the roles that children occupy in the news so as to determine whether the media perpetuates certain stereotypes about them. Figure 7 shows the different roles that children occupied during the monitoring period.

**Figure 7: Children's roles in the media**
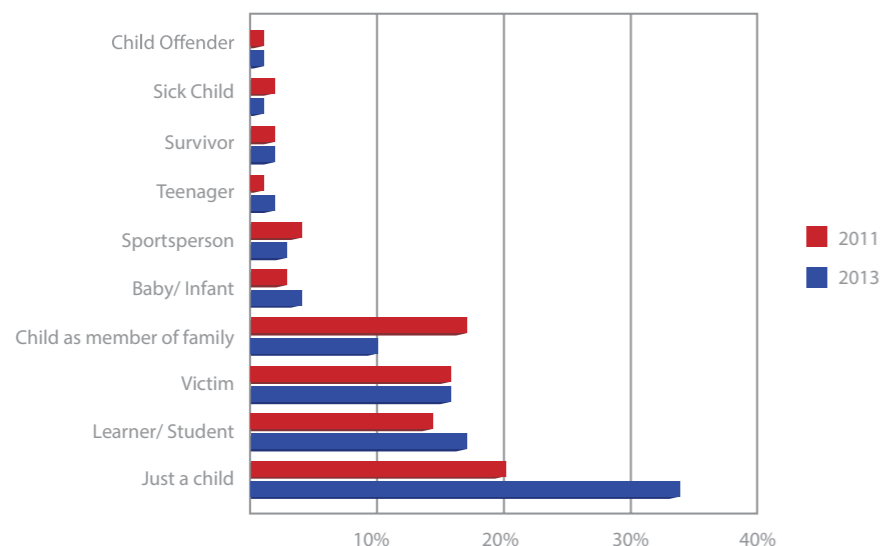
There were no significant changes in the roles assigned to children during the monitoring period with the exception of two roles. In 2013, South African media continued to predominantly portray children as "just a child" (34%), an increase of 14 percent when compared to 2011. This can be attributed to a lack of allocation of more definitive roles to children in news stories. Although not overtly negative, this role tends to generalise children and strips them of their individualism.

This can also be said for "child as member of a family", a more passive role where the other significant change, a drop of eight percent in 2013, was seen. This drop would have been welcomed had the difference been distributed to more positive and active roles such as sportsperson. The graph indicates that these (positive) roles are scarcely assigned to children in the media and in fact more generic and negative roles remain in the top 10 including "victim" which has remained stable at 17 percent since 2011.

4.1.1.8 Age of Children in the News

Just as in 2011, children's news was dominated by teenagers during the monitoring period constituting 37 percent and 38 percent respectively. This lead was mainly as a result of the coverage afforded to education issues relating to pupils in high school including the textbook delivery saga and matric exams as mentioned under the most common topics section.

Figure 8: Age of children in the news
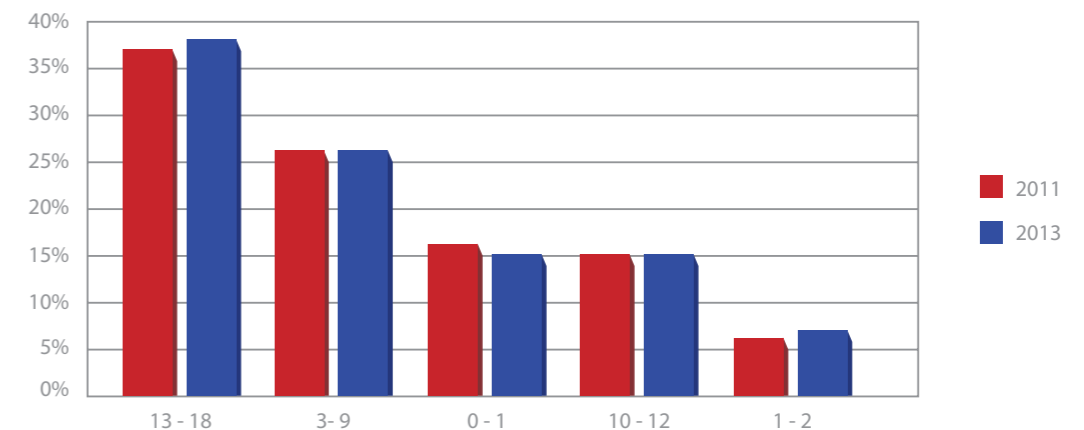
Most of the figures remain stagnant, with children under the ages 1-2, receiving the least coverage followed by children between the ages of 0-1 and 10-12. While this is mainly due to how the different age groups were categorised, with the 3-9 and 13-18 age groups wider than the rest, it is also an indication of less coverage given to younger children, particularly those still in their infancy.

This is a noteworthy concern as this group faces a lot of challenges such as health and early childhood mortality.[20] This poses a challenge to the media to report on the different issues that affect different age groups in South Africa.

4.1.1.9 How children were sourced in the news

Over the years children in South Africa have had limited opportunities to express their views in the media.[21] This is despite conventions like the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child[22] which South Africa is a signatory to and which promote children's participation and freedom of expression as a fundamental right in the media.

Children can offer valuable insights into matters that affect them when it is in their best interests to do so yet media still shy away from exploring their unique perspectives. It is fundamental to determine whether South African media are playing their role in ensuring that children's voices are heard in their stories to ensure the fulfilment of their basic human rights to freedom of expression and participation. Figure 9 highlights how children were accessed during the monitoring period.

As explained in the methodology section, children were regarded as sources in stories when accessed (directly or indirectly quoted), named, photographed, mentioned by means of age or sex or referred to. In other words a child was classified as a source, when his/her voice was heard in the story, when he/she was pictured or named, where he/ she was mentioned or where a combination of these would occur.

20. The 2012-2013 South African Child Gauge 2012. University of Cape Town, p.21.

21. http://www.unicef.org/southafrica/SAF_publications_soulbuddiez.pdf

22. Article 13 of the United Convention on the Rights of t he Child available on http://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/crc.aspx

Figure 9: How children were sourced in the news
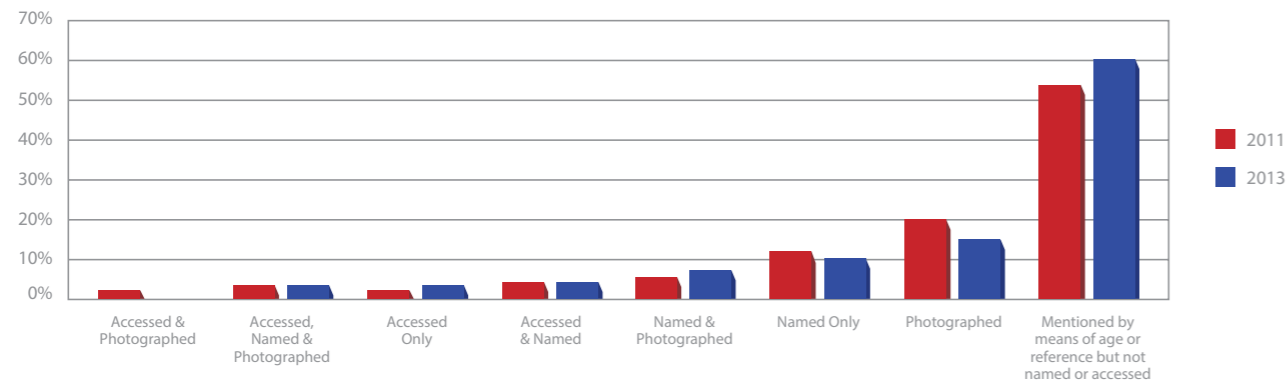
Findings in 2013 revealed that children are still primarily merely mentioned or referred to in the media, rather than named or quoted directly or indirectly. In fact the percentage increased by four percent since 2011, a sign that children still do not have much of an identity in the media. Examples of this include phrases like: "a group of children," or "an-eight-year-old girl". When it is not necessary to use this phrasing, for example where the child is not at risk if he/she is identified the media, this trend tends to reduce the worth of a child in a story, especially since children are not quoted in these instances.

In 2011, children were only accessed (quoted directly or indirectly) seven percent of the time in news stories relating to them and this remained unchanged in 2013. This is a cause for concern as it demonstrates that the media monitored do not prioritise children's voices in their coverage and fail to give children the opportunity to voice their opinions in matters that involve them.

Zibobo Ndileka, a child monitor from Naturena Primary School in Grade 6, adds:
"Children need to be heard and taken seriously. The fact that we are young does not mean we can't face the media. We need to give our different views based on the stories that (the media) print about us. When we achieve things we need to express how we feel and we must be free and not just sit and fold our arms as if we are not worth anything."

Photographs were the second highest form of sourcing children in stories during the monitoring period. This speaks to our findings on page 11 where photographs were the third most common format for news stories relating to children. There were no significant changes in the other forms of sourcing children in the media in 2013.

Below is an example of a story which appeared in the Cape Argus, (16/07/2013, p.6), where the journalist missed an opportunity to include the views of the child:

Example 1: Child not accessed

There were also good examples of where children were accessed by the media. The story below is an example of how the media can access children for their views when is in their best interest. Published in Daily Sun (17/03/2013:p3), the story is about a four-year-old boy with a keen interest in the news and history who also hope to be the president one day.

Example 2: Child accessed

4.1.1.10 Children's rights in the news

MMA analysed headlines, images and the content in news stories to determine how frequent children's rights were respected or violated. This refers to what MMA identifies as the four main rights of children in the media, namely: rights to privacy, dignity, freedom of expression and participation. Not only are these rights enshrined in the South African Constitution but they are also in line with other protections for children's rights including the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Figure 10: Children's rights in the news

- Stories that violated childrens right
- Stories that did not violate childrens right
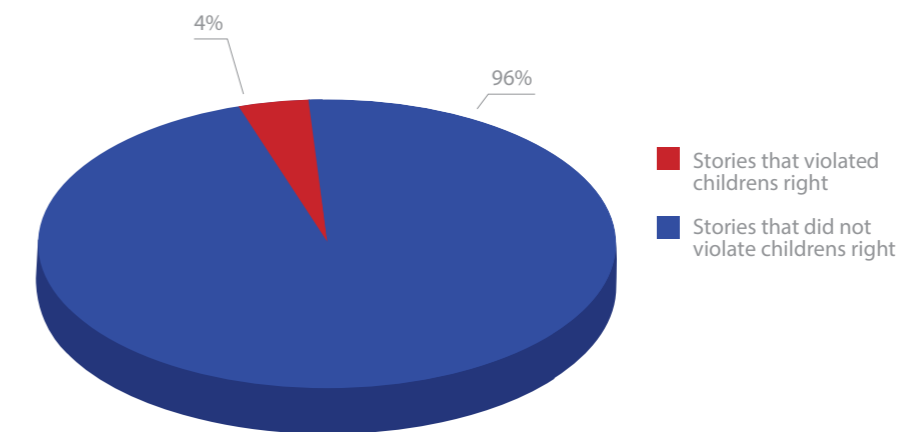
In 2013, four percent of stories violated children's rights in their reportage, an increase of two percent since 2011. While at first glance it might seem that the media are doing exceedingly well when it comes to not violating children's rights, it should be noted that although the percentage of stories that do violate children's rights is seemingly low, when translated into numbers the figure is quite high, constituting 272 stories. Identifying vulnerable children who have been abused or are witnesses in criminal proceedings for instance can have negative consequences for the children including secondary trauma. Therefore, the media should aim at decreasing incidences of children's rights violations in the media as this has far reaching repercussions for the individual child. MMA encourages the media to aim for zero percent of stories which violate children's stories as even one story can have profound negative impacts on a child's life.

The article (right) is an example of a story which violated a child's rights. Published in The New Age (27/05/2013, p.1) the article reports on a teenager accused of killing his family. The child was identified in the story.

*MMA has blocked out names in the story to avoid further identification of the child.

Example 3: Child rights violated

Other pockets of good practice were also seen in the media during the monitoring period such as the example below published by The Star, (28/05/2013, p.4). The article, which also reported on the same story as that in Example 3, hid the identity of a family member of the accused teenager in an effort to protect his identity.

This is a great example of how a story can still retain its informational value even without identifying a child.

Example 4: Child's rights protected

Boy accused of killing family was drug addict

SHOCKED BY KILLINGS: A grandfather of the 14-year-old boy who murdered his family last week at Barcelona, Etwatwa, near Benoni. His face has been blurred to protect the identity of the accused. PICTURE: MOTSHWARI MOFOKENG

4.1.1.11 Race in the media

According to the South African Human Rights Commission and UNICEF,[23] racial inequalities are still prevalent in South Africa as children in previously disadvantaged groups face more challenges than their counterparts. Therefore, there is some level of importance in analysing race in the media, especially that of children in order to determine whether coverage reflects the racial demographics of children in the country and by extension the issues that they face.

MMA analysed the coverage received by Black, White, Coloured, Indian and Asian children. "Other" was also a category used to analyse races, usually international e.g. Hispanics, which are not categorised in national government statistics. Figure11 shows how different races were covered during the monitoring period.

Figure 11: Race of children in the media

Almost similar to 2011, black children accounted for most of the coverage in 2013 which is to be expected as this group makes up the majority of the population of children in South Africa.[24] When continuing to consider the race of children in the country, it appears that the coverage received by other race groups is almost representative of their racial demographics with the exception of white children who continue to be overrepresented in the media.

This poses a challenge to the media to aim to afford more coverage of different racial groups and their issues.

4.1.1.12 Quality of children's stories in the news

Events hardly stand alone. Instead they are linked to different societal issues. Once consistently treated in isolation without the presentation of background or supporting information, the reader tends to lose out on the "bigger picture" linked to a story.

While quality is hard to define, MMA analyses the kind of information provided by journalists in news stories relating to children with the aim to determine whether pervasive challenges and events affecting children are given due analysis and context. This includes whether background information on issues and events was provided by the journalist, in addition to explaining the consequences of events and possible solutions to issues amongst other things. Figure 12 shows the variety of information provided in stories in 2013.

Figure 12: Quality of children's stories in the news
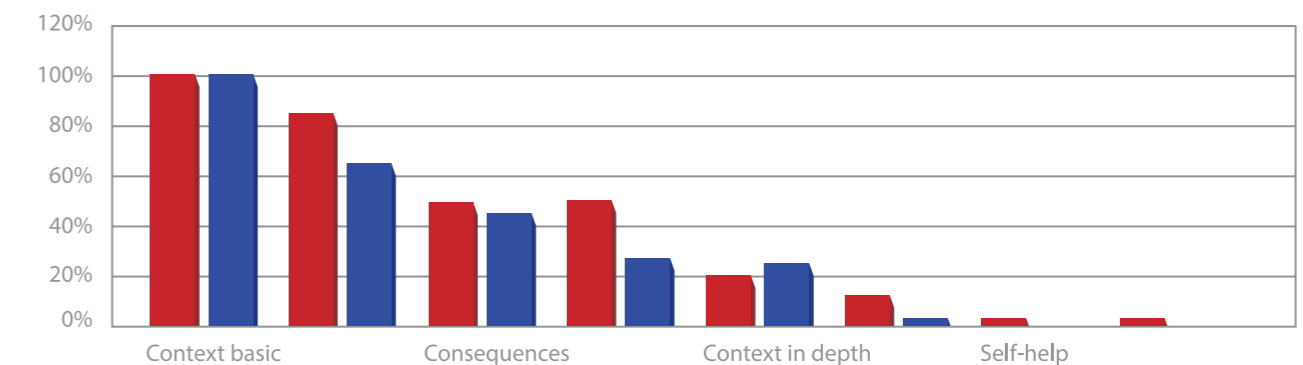
It is almost expected for "Context basic" to stand at 100 percent as this includes basic information provided by a journalist in a story. This refers to the commonly known 5Ws and H of a news story, in other words (What, Who, Where, When, Why and How).

When probed deeper, the findings in 2013 revealed that although there is an increase of six percent, stories are rarely given "Context in depth" or greater context. Stories have also seen a decline of 19 percent in the explanation of causes and of 12 percent in the offering of solutions.
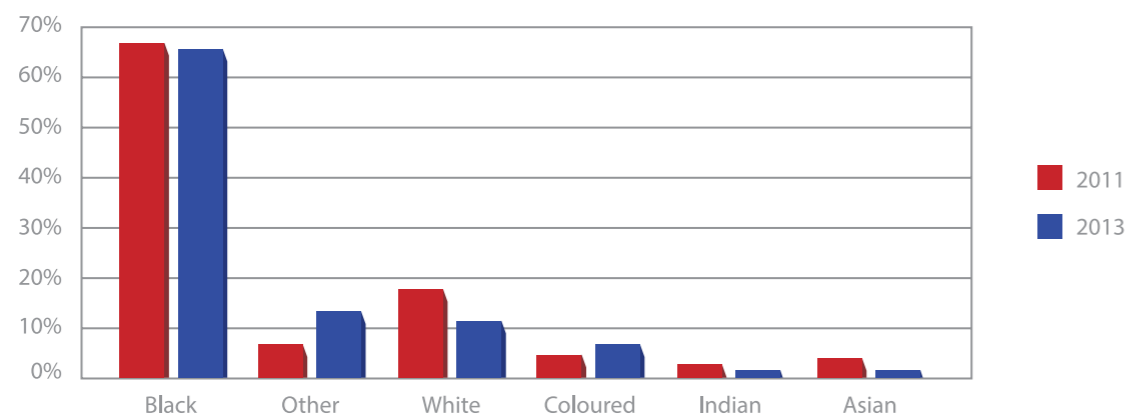
This is a concerning trend and also speaks to our findings on the types of stories which show that children's stories are rarely reported in the form of features, a news reporting format, which provides analysis and critical thinking in relation to issues facing children.

4.2 Children's monitoring

"Journalists assume that children do not know much about what is going on in South Africa because have never really given us the opportunity or asked us about these things. As children we do know a lot more than they think we do."
Francesca Martis, child media monitor in Grade 7, Park Senior Primary.

The findings on this section focus on the analyses of news stories or media monitoring conducted by child media monitors. The methodology was designed in such a way that allowed for child monitors to express their emotions in relation to how children are represented in news media.

Therefore, it should be noted that while quantitative at times, the results of children's monitoring are largely empirical.

23. http://www.unicef.org/southafrica/SAF_resources_factschildrens11.pdf

24. http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/Report-03-19-00/Report-03-19-002011.pdf

4.2.1 Good and bad news reporting

Figure 13 below shows the breakdown of what the children considered to be well reported or badly reported stories. In this section a few factors were considered by the child monitors including the quality of journalism and depth of information provided news stories.

Child monitors also considered efforts made by the media to minimise harm through the protection and promotion of four fundamental rights namely: rights to privacy, dignity, freedom of speech and participation.

Figure 13: Good vs poor news reporting

- Badly reported
- Well reported
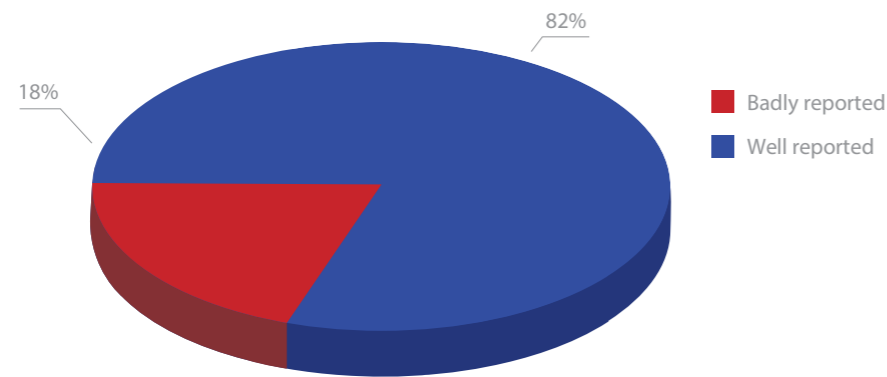
In 2013, child monitors felt that the media made a good effort in relation to reporting on children. The children felt that in the majority of monitored the articles (82%) the journalists demonstrated sound and ethical journalism. The 18 percent of the badly reported stories mainly represented instances where the media did not give children a chance to speak in the stories.

This finding is a slight improvement from 2011 where 80% of stories we considered well reported and 20% considered badly reported. Going forward media should continue with this trend by making deliberate effort to include the voices of children where possible.

4.2.2 Topic of the Stories: What were the stories about?

Each news story that was monitored was given a topic code that related to it. Figure 14 shows top 10 topics as chosen by the child monitors (accounting for 75% of the stories) that dominated the monitored media in 2013.

Figure 14: What were stories about in 2011 vs 2013
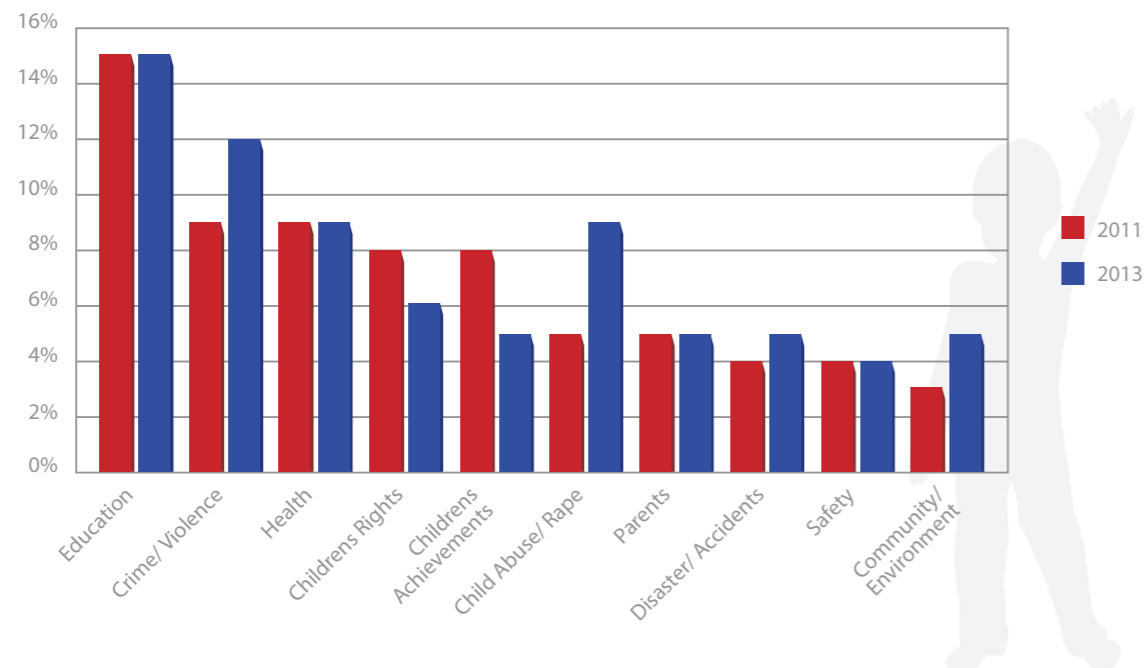
> "The media should report on education to make the government aware of what is happening in schools because some schools are quite low quality." **Sydwell Saal, child media monitor from Park Senior**

The 2013 findings revealed that education was the most common topic for monitored children's stories just as in the monitoring conducted by adult monitors. The analysis made by the children revealed that the media monitored had a reasonably even distribution of a range of topics that are pertinent to children. It is concerning that a closer look at this graph shows that in 2013 the media focused more on negative stories than they did in 2011. For instance stories on crime and violence increased by three percent, child abuse and rape stories also went up by four percent and disappointingly more positive stories on children such as children's achievements went down by three percent.

Child monitors would prefer that children be shown in more positive stories than the current levels. This is not to say that the bad things that happen to children are not important to reflect in the media but the good things are just as important. The media should progress towards representing children more positively.

4.2.3 Boys and girls coverage according to topics

During the monitoring period, child monitors also analysed how boys and girls were represented under different topics. This was done in order to determine the coverage afforded to different genders and the issues that affect them.

These findings are also useful in determining gender bias in the media, in other words whether a certain gender was placed in stories where it was more likely to occupy more positive and active roles while its counterpart was featured in stories where it was likely to be portrayed in more negative or passive roles.

Figure 15: Topics by gender 2013
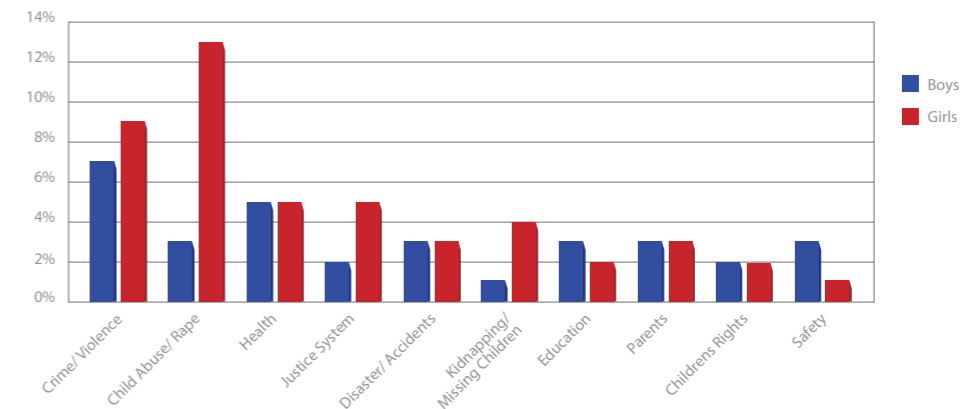
- Boys
- Girls

It is encouraging to note that in 2013 there was somewhat a balanced representation of boys and girls across different topics with the exception of child rape, the justice system and kidnapping where stories were mostly about girls but the focus given to boys was almost equal. Media are encouraged to also report on cases of child abuse in relation to the boy child as the findings show that there was a huge disparity in how the media reported on this topic in relation to both genders. In 2011, the children's monitoring showed similar trends as seen in the figure below.
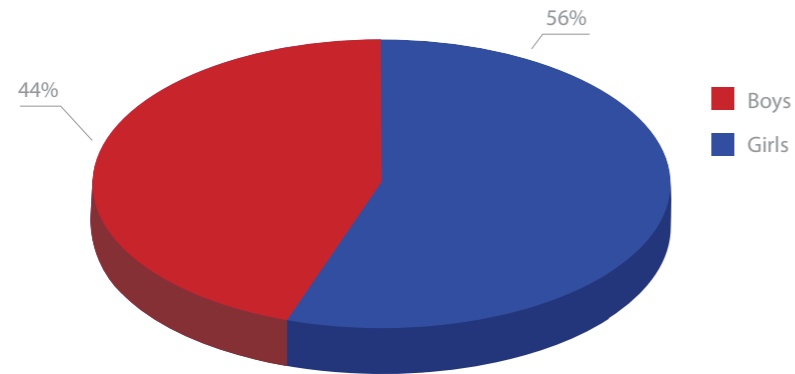
Figure 16: Topics by gender 2011
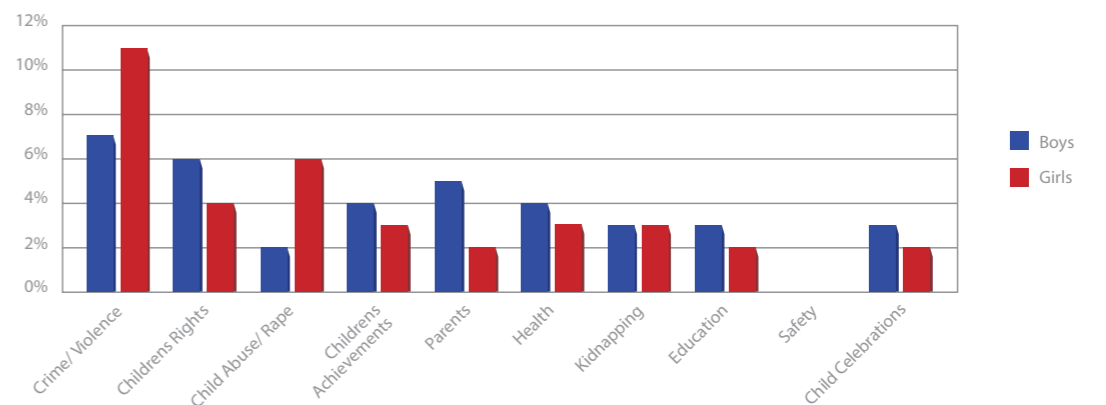
- Boys
- Girls

4.2.4 Boys vs. Girls

Figure 17 shows a gender breakdown of boys and girls in stories where the child monitors could clearly count the number of girls and boys in the articles they were monitoring.

**Figure 17: Boys vs. Girls**

56% Boys
44% Girls

In 2013, girls were represented more than boys in the monitored news stories. Over the recent years this has been common trend where the representation of girls and boys has been almost equally balanced. In 2011 representation of girls was at 48% and boys 52% however the gap between the coverage of the two genders was much wider in 2013. Media are encouraged to aim towards more equal representation of both girls and boys and the issues that they face.

4.2.5 Roles for children in the stories

"Media should show us in our different and versatile ways and look at the impact we can make in South Africa."
Chinane Ngwedzeni, child monitor from Park Senior Primary.

Figure 18 shows the roles which children most frequently occupied in news stories during the monitoring period. This is to determine whether the portrayal of children in the media was limited or whether they were shown in more diverse roles.

Figure 18: Top 5 roles in 2011 and 2013
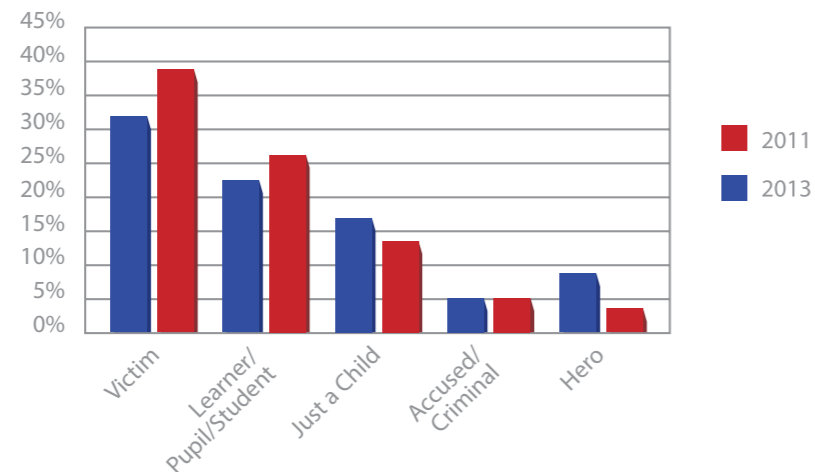
It is sad to note that a significant number of children in the monitored news stories were represented as victims. The findings also revealed that children were hardy portrayed in more overtly positive and empowering, roles such as hero, which has seen a decline since 2011. In fact, the results also show that the media see children in limited roles, mostly either as victims or as school going children as these two roles combined accounted for 65 percent of all stories.

Children play an important role in society and are much more than the roles depicted in the media during the monitoring period. Media are encouraged to show children in their diversity and in more positive and active roles.

4.2.6 Boys and girls coverage according role

Figure 19 is an extension of the previous graph and demonstrates the roles that were particularly common for girls and boys. This was done to determine the different roles assigned to different genders and to ascertain whether certain gender stereotypes were perpetuated in the media.

This data reflects instances where child monitors could count the number of boys and girls in a story, and excludes stories where the coverage was just generally about children and the gender, in relation to the topic of a story, was unclear.

Figure 19: Top 5 roles for boys and girls in 2013
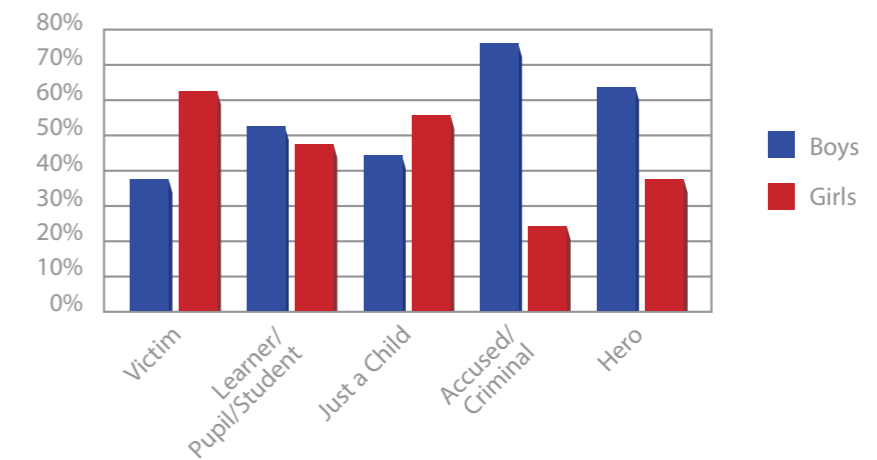
In 2013, girls were portrayed as victims in the majority of monitored stories. Apart from this role boys and girls tended to be almost equally represented during the monitoring period. Considering that victim is a passive and disempowering role, media are encouraged to report on more stories where children, and more particularly different genders, can be seen in more positive roles and active roles.

The figure below shows how the trend of how different genders were shown in the media was almost similar in 2011 with the exception of the role of victim, where boys were portrayed under this role slightly more than girls.

Figure 20: Top 5 roles for girls and boys in 2011
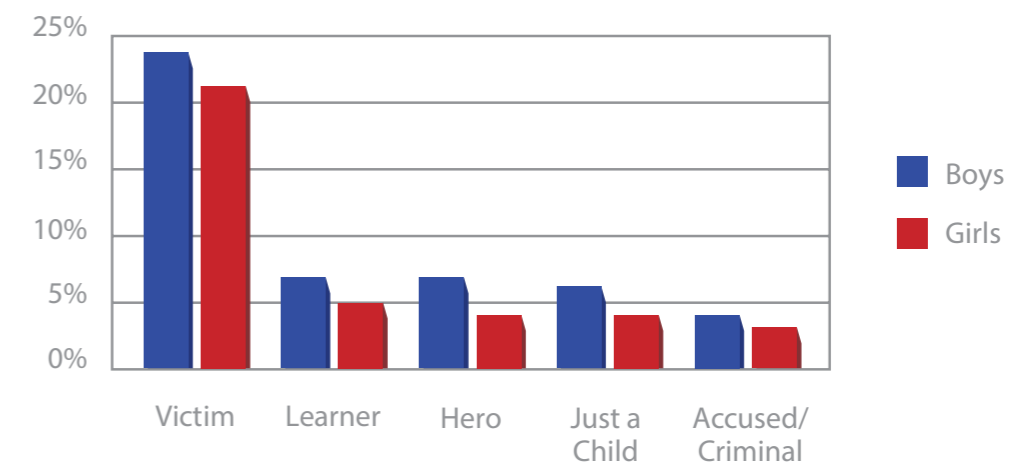
4.2.7 How did children feel about the stories?

Figure 21 illustrates how the media monitors felt about the stories they were monitoring. Responses from the monitors were based on their feelings towards how the stories were reported as well as their feelings towards what happened to the children in the stories.

Figure 21: How did children feel about the stories in 2013
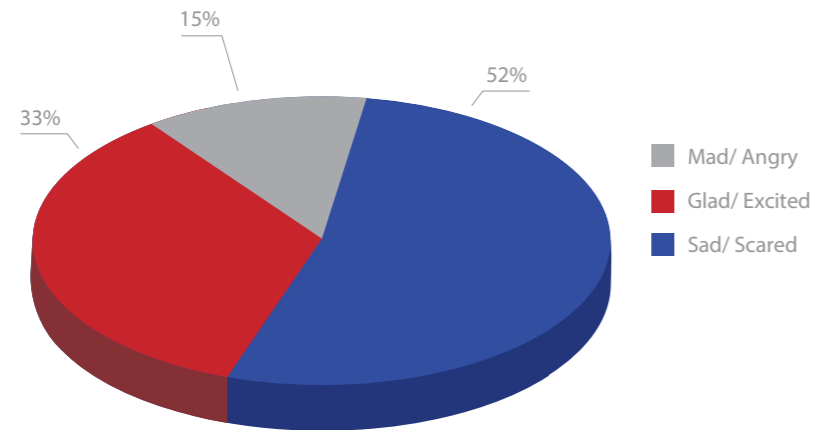
The figure above shows that in 2013 child monitors had negative feelings towards the stories they were analysing most times.

The findings revealed that 67 percent of the stories made them either mad and angry OR sad and scared. Only, 33 percent of the stories made them happy. This is a shift from 2011 where 48% of the stories made them glad and excited, and 52 percent made them mad or sad as indicated in the graph below.

Figure 22: How did children feel about the stories in 2011
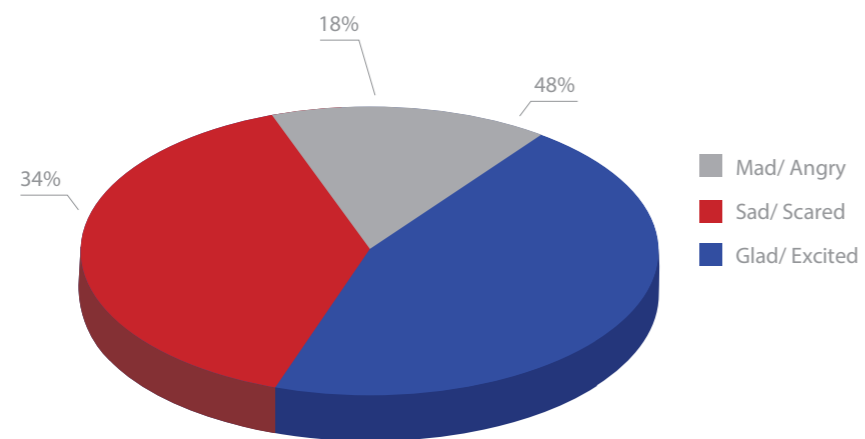
5. Zambian background

Zambia has a population of 13 million estimated people.[25] Of these 13 million, about 50 percent are under the age of 14. Like South African children and those in other parts of the world, Zambian children are confronted with many challenges.

According to SOS Children's Villages International, "thousands have been orphaned by AIDS and live a life without parental care, many of them in crippling poverty.

Access to primary education is nothing but wishful thinking in some regions of Zambia."[26] Given these aforementioned challenges, we can deduce that children constitute an extremely vulnerable fragment of the Zambian population.

Furthermore, children in Zambia are also victims of abuse despite punitive measures such as legislative frameworks have been implemented to protect them. It is for this reason that we look upon the media, as a powerful tool to advocate for children's rights and more specifically, to promote awareness of the societal ills that continue to cripple one of the most vulnerable groups of the Zambian population.

The research uses this backdrop to uncover how the media in Zambia reports on children and issues that affect them. It does this with the aim of determining whether the media are committed to the fulfilment of children's rights as enshrined in the UNCRC, AWCRC and other protections afforded to Zambian children.

5.1 Zambian findings

In 2011, children accounted for 244 stories (10%) of the total 2441 news stories which appeared in the media during the monitoring period. In 2013, children's stories accounted for 530 (5%) of the total number of 9859 news stories which appeared in the media. This indicates that children are still significantly underrepresented in Zambian media.

When looking at the stories where children were the central focus, the findings revealed that only 181 stories (2%) of the total number of those which appeared in the media had a central focus on children. This is a deeply concerning trend and demands the attention and focus of the media on children and the issues that they face.

This section will firstly look at the Zambian background. Secondly, it will discuss the adult monitoring findings, and lastly the child monitoring findings.

5.1.1 Adult monitoring

Over the past three years the media in Zambia were monitored by trained adult and child media monitors to determine how children are represented and portrayed in the media.

This section will compare the 2011 findings of the adult media monitoring with those from 2013The finding from the monitoring by children will highlight be highlighted later in the report.

5.1.1.1 Performance rating

Performance ratings are done to determine an overall performance of all monitored media. As outlined in the methodology section factors such as the violation or promotion of children's rights, voices, issues in-depth and diversity of stories monitored were taken into consideration when determining the overall performance of the media. The figure below shows how the media in Zambia performed overall.

Table 5: Perfomance ratings

Medium	Ranking				
	Rights respected	Voices Heard	Issues in depth	Diversity	Ratings
Zambia Daily Mail	1	4	3	1	1
The Post	2	5	1	2	2
ZNBCTV	3	2	8	4	3
Times of Zambia	6	6	2	3	4
ZNBCTV2	7	3	7	5	5
Muvi TV	9	1	4	6	6
Radio Christian Voice	4	9	5	9	7
Hot	5	7	9	7	8
Radio Phoenix	8	10	10	10	9
Qfm	10	8	6	8	10

Zambia Daily Mail was rated first out of the ten media monitored in Zambia. This is a great achievement for the newspaper considering that in 2012 it was rated eighth overall.

The rating could be attributed to the newspaper's improvement in its portrayal of children across the board in particular, striving to ensure the respect of children's rights and representing children in their diversity. This is a clear indication that Zambia Daily Mail has grown conscious of how it reports on children and their issues.

Q fm however dropped from sixth to tenth place in the ratings.[27] This could be attributed to the fact that the radio station scored badly when it came to respecting children's rights, promoting voices, and providing analysis on their issues.[28]

Media are encouraged to make note of where they could improve in the different components of the rating system and with aim to improve reporting of children.

5.1.1.2 Number of children's stories

The quantity of children's stories in the media is crucial as it indicates the attention afforded to children and by extension their issues by Zambian media.

Children in Zambia make up over 50% of the total population,[29] hence there is need for them to occupy a fair amount of space in the media if their issues are going to be heard. However, the results below show that when looking at the number of children's stories against the total average number of stories in each of the monitored media, children are still not given enough coverage in the media.

Table 6: Number of children's stories

MEDIUM	2011	2013
Muvi TV	9%	16%
Radio Christian Voice	6%	15%
Radio Phoenix	0*	15%
ZNBC TV	6%	13%
Qfm	0*	13%
ZNBC TV 2	0*	10%
Hot FM	0*	9%
Zambia Daily Mail	2%	3%
The Post Newspaper	8%	3%
The Times of Zambia	0*	3%

*Data was unavailable in 2011 as monitoring of these media only began in 2012.

As in 2011, MUVI TV continued to dominate other Zambian media when it came to the representation of children. In fact, the television station increased in children's content by seven percent. MUVI TV should be commended for its increased focus on children on their issues but in the same breath the station is also encouraged to also focus on how it portrays children as it was rated sixth in this respect. Other media which also increased in children's content include Radio Christian Voice which more than doubled in its content since 2011 and ZNBC TV.

A comparative analysis was unavailable for media which were only added to the analysis in 2012. These media are QFM, HOT FM, Radio Phoenix, The Times of Zambia and ZNBCTV 2. With the exception of The Times of Zambia, all the other media had a representation of children of over 10 percent, a competitive percentage when compared to other media like The Post Newspaper, Zambia Daily Mail and The Times of Zambia which were monitored in 2011. Zambian media are encouraged to focus more on children and their issues.

5.1.1.3 Geographical coverage

Monitoring the origin of stories is a fundamental factor in determining the geographical regions which media focus on when reporting on children. The findings revealed that media tend to concentrate more on urban areas as demonstrated by Figure 23.
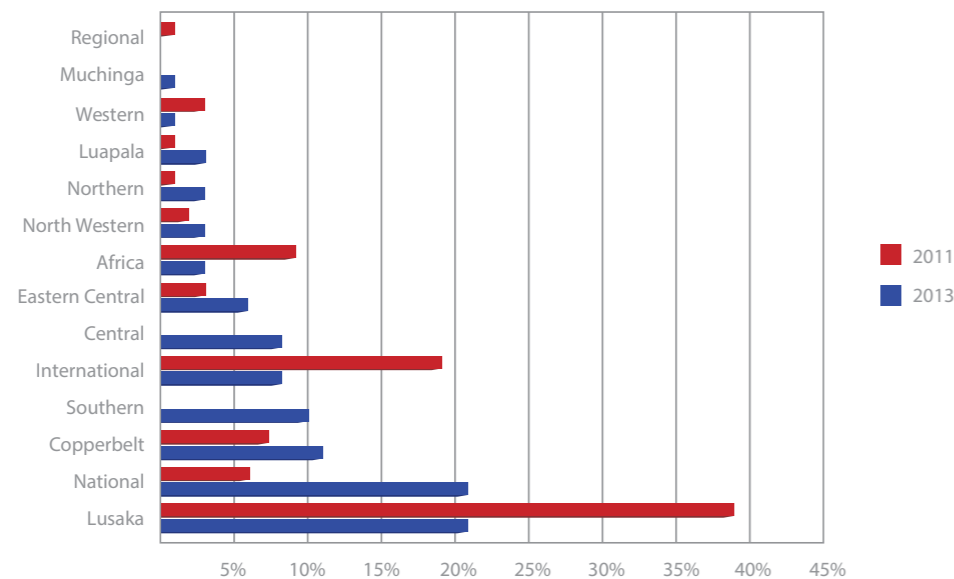
The below graph shows that although they have decreased in percentages since 2011, urban areas such as Lusaka and the Copperbelt continue to receive more coverage in the media than less developed areas in Zambia. This is further evidenced when looking at rural areas such as Muchinga and Luapula continue to receive the lowest coverage. The assumption is that urban areas receive more coverage because media houses are located in these areas where sources are more easily accessible, as opposed to rural areas where there are more challenges of accessibility and infrastructure and therefore a lack of investment in approaching these areas by media companies.

The consistent coverage of urban areas is beneficial for children in the urban areas however very detrimental to the development of children in the rural areas as their issues are neglected. This may result in children in these areas receiving less priority from the state and other relevant authorities who are supposed to provide these children with basic services essential for their development.

Media should adhere to its role of informing citizens equally of the issues that affect the entire country, not only particular areas.

27. Rikhotso , Namumba , Morwe & Dibetso (2013,27)

28. Performance rating not included in 2011. Therefore 2012 used to compare with the 2013 results

29. www.indexmundi.com/zambia

Figure 23: Origin of stories

This would result in the improvement in coverage of challenges in rural areas and consequently improve services and contribute to the eradication of the issues facing children in these areas. Therefore, media is urged to evenly spread coverage and ensure that all provinces receive a fair amount of coverage.

5.1.1.4 Topic coverage

Children in Zambia are faced by a number of challenges. Therefore, it is important that issues involving children are closely examined to determine whether they are receiving the necessary attention in the media. Figure 24 shows common topics in media's reporting on children.

Figure 24: Most common topics
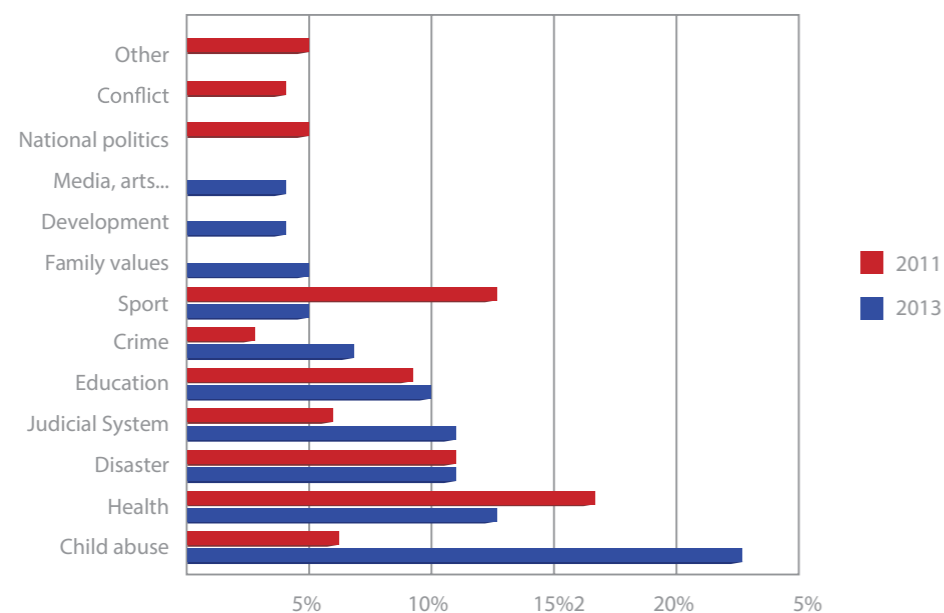
The top ten topics in 2013 are a reflection of the issues that continue to dominate Zambian society. Mostly these topics were characterised by a mixture of positive and mostly negative stories. There was significant increase in the coverage of child abuse from six percent in 2011 to 23 percent in 2013.[30] The increase is attributed to common cases of child abuse including child defilement.[31] Health decreased by 4 percent since 2011 while sports (a positive topic) decreased by eight percent. Different topics appeared in the top 10 in 2013 from those in 2011. National politics, conflict and other (this topic is rarely used for when stories cannot be given a specific topic by monitors) were replaced by more positive topics in 2013 namely, family values, media, arts and lifestyle and development policies.

Media is commended for highlighting the spread of child abuse, health, education and other issues that affect children in Zambia. However; media should ensure that they also cover topics such as sport and profiles about children. These will ensure that children's diverse issues are raised in the media.

5.1.1.5 Children's rights in the news

Zambian Constitution like many in the world champions the promotion and protection of children's rights.[32] However these remain an ongoing challenge amongst media who continue to violate children's rights. Figure 25 shows how media fared in terms of respecting and violating children's rights in their reporting.

Figure 25: Children's rights in the news
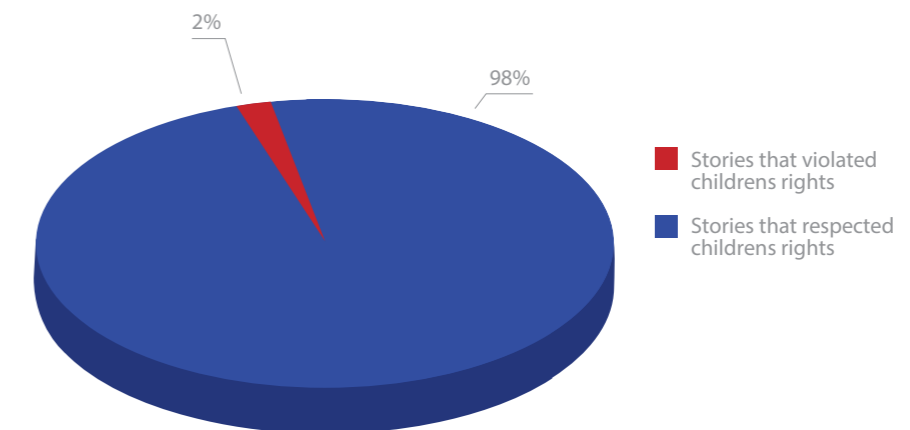
Since 2011, there has been a slight decrease in the violation of children's rights in the media when this figure stood at three percent of stories. It has since decreased to two percent in 2013[33]. This is a positive sign indicative of more efforts made in the media to protect and promote children's rights particularly those of children who should not be identified in the media. This is a great step towards creating a favourable platform to help children tell their stories without fear of being victimised or stigmatised by knowing the media are doing well in protecting their rights.

It should be noted that despite all the progress that the media in Zambia have made, there still is a room for further improvement. Media should strive for a zero percent children's right violation.

The example below is a compelling reference for a need for Zambian media to protect the rights of children who appear in the media. Published in Zambia Daily Mail (16/07/201; P2) the article reports on a father who appeared in court for sodomising his son.

The man was named in the story which indirectly identified the victim who was still a minor and whose identity should have been concealed in the media.

This should be done in order to avoid subjecting children in these circumstances, or those similar in nature, to discrimination in their communities or further trauma which could impede on s their healing process.

Example 5: Child rights violated

30. Abuse result not in the 2011 report because the results focused on the top 5. Child abuse constituted six percent of findings
31. Rikhotso & Roberts (2012.p28)
32. http://www.zambia.co.zm/downloads/draft_constitution.pdf
33. Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p34)

5.1.1.6 Boys and girls representation in news

Media should allow for and promote equal participation of boys and girls in the media. This is crucial as it promotes the idea of equal participation, and challenges gender bias in the media and society by extension. Therefore it is of importance to examine the sexes of children in coverage. The figure below highlights the coverage afforded to boys and girls during the monitoring period.

Figure 26: Boys and girls representation in the news
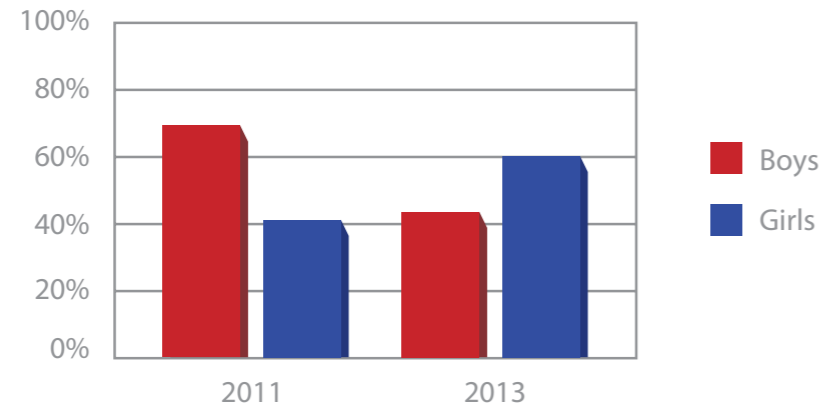
Over the years there have been significant disparities in the coverage afforded to girls and boys in Zambian media. In 2011, boys dominated the coverage by 69 percent compared to girls at 31 percent.[34]

In 2013, girls received more coverage, a staggering increase of 29 percent which was directly apportioned from the percentage drop seen by the coverage of boys in 2013. This shift could be attributed to the dominance of child abuse stories in the media which mostly reported on girls as the victims.

While this increase is an improvement on the representation of girls and by extension their issues which were previously neglected in Zambian media it is a great concern that the coverage of boys has decreased by such a considerable amount. The media should strive to ensure an equitable coverage between girls and the boys in order to contribute to the eradication of the challenges encountered by both sexes.

5.1.1.7 Ages of children in the news

Different age groups face different challenges in society. While teenage pregnancy may be a pressing issue for teenagers, proper nutrition demands much attention for younger developing children. It is therefore important to analyse how frequently different ages receive coverage in the media in order to gauge how often their issues are given attention in the media Figure 27 reveals how frequently different ages appeared in the media.

Figure 27: Age of children in the news
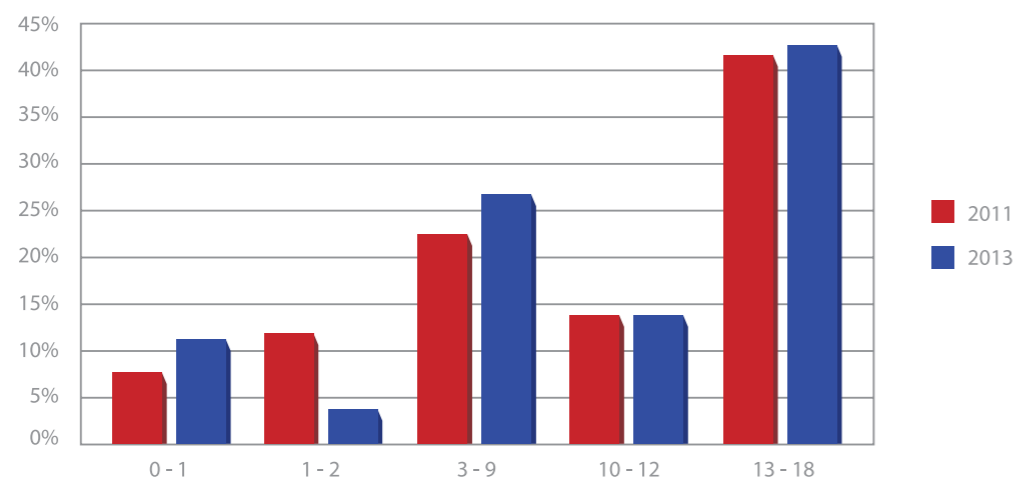
34. Rikhotso & Roberts (2012, p32)

The dominance of the coverage of teenagers in the media has been consistent since 2011 and remains the same at 43 percent. Three to nine year olds received the second most coverage after teenagers and also saw a slight increase of four percent since 2011. The dominance by these two groups is partly due to the wider pool of ages included in these brackets as opposed to the other age but is also taken as a reflection of how the media tends to report more on these age groups.

The coverage of 10 – 12 year olds remains unchanged while the last two age groups have seen slight increases. Infants (0-1) have seen an increase of four percent while and babies (1 to 2) have decreased in coverage by eight percent. The decrease could be attributed to the increase in child abuse and education stories; which exclude these groups as they rarely appear in these stories.

The media is encouraged to strive for equal coverage of all children to help them eradicate and find the solutions to their challenges.

5.1.1.8 Children's roles in the news

The way in which children are portrayed in the media has a profound impact in shaping perceptions of them in society. Therefore, common misconceptions or limited views about children need to be challenged in the media. Children should be shown in their diverse roles reflective of the challenges they face but they should also be portrayed in their capable, individual capacities. The graph below shows the roles allocated to children by Zambian media.

Figure 28: Children's roles in the news
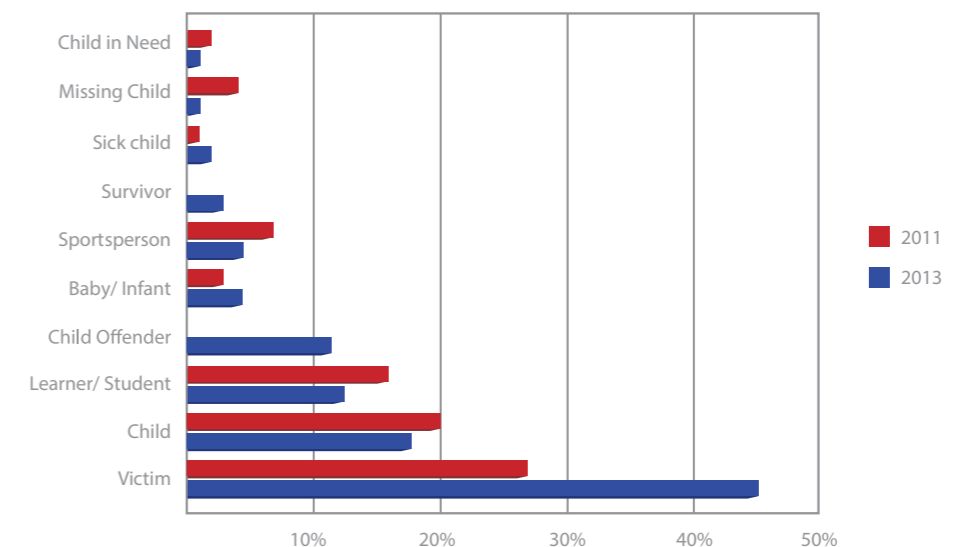
Children continue to be predominantly portrayed as victims in Zambian media. In fact, this role has seen a significant increase of 18 percent since which can be attributed to the increase in the coverage of abuse in the media as seen in the coverage of topics. Most of the roles in the top ten of those assigned to children during the monitoring period can be generally deemed as negative or plain.

Examples of negative roles include roles such as "child offender or "child in need" which feed into disempowering and passive views of children. Plain or generic roles include those such as "Just a Child" or "Baby/Infant".

Although these are not overtly negative roles, when consistently used to identify children in the media, they tend to limit their portrayal and shy away from showing them in more active and empowering roles.

While it is important to report on children when they are victimised, Zambian media are urged to also strive to portray children in more positive and diverse roles.

5.1.1.9 Children's voices

Children should be able to tell their stories and add their views to matters that affect them when they are emotionally able to do so. Children's voices are a fundamental part of their human rights therefore media should ensure that such rights are upheld. Figure 29 shows how children in Zambia were sourced in the media.

Figure 29: How children are sourced in the news

Legend: 2011 (red), 2013 (blue)

Categories: Accessed & Named, Accessed Only, Accessed, Named & Photographed, Accessed & Photographed, Named & Photographed, Named Only, Photographed, Mentioned by means of age or reference but not named or accessed
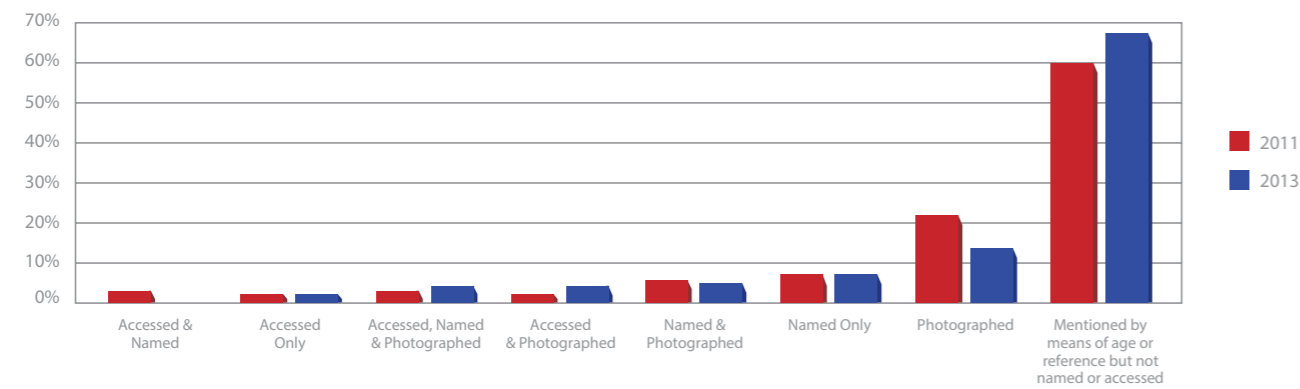
Children's voices in Zambian media remain sidelined. Although the 2013 findings revealed an increase of one percent since 2011 in cases where children were accessed (quoted directly or indirectly) children's views are still significantly marginalised. Moreover, children hardly have an identity in Zambian media. Images of children have decreased by eight percent in the media and instead children continued to be merely mentioned rather than named at 68 percent in 2013, an increase of eight percent since 2011.

The media are encouraged to access children's views and to also aim towards treating children as central sources in news stories, when it is in their best interests to do so. The story below is an example from Sunday Mail (21/04/2013; p15) of the instances where the media failed to give children the opportunity to express their views. The story is about a seven-year-old girl who was selected to play at the inter-provincial chess tourney. Although a positive story, the child's views were not expressed in the article.

ROYCE Kajinga, left, during a practice game at Solwezi Technical High School in Solwezi on Friday before departure for Ndola. – Picture by KATONGO CHISUPA

Seven-year-old girl to play at inter-provincial chess tourney

Example 6: Child not accessed

Media should seek to include more children's voices in accordance with the journalism code of practices.
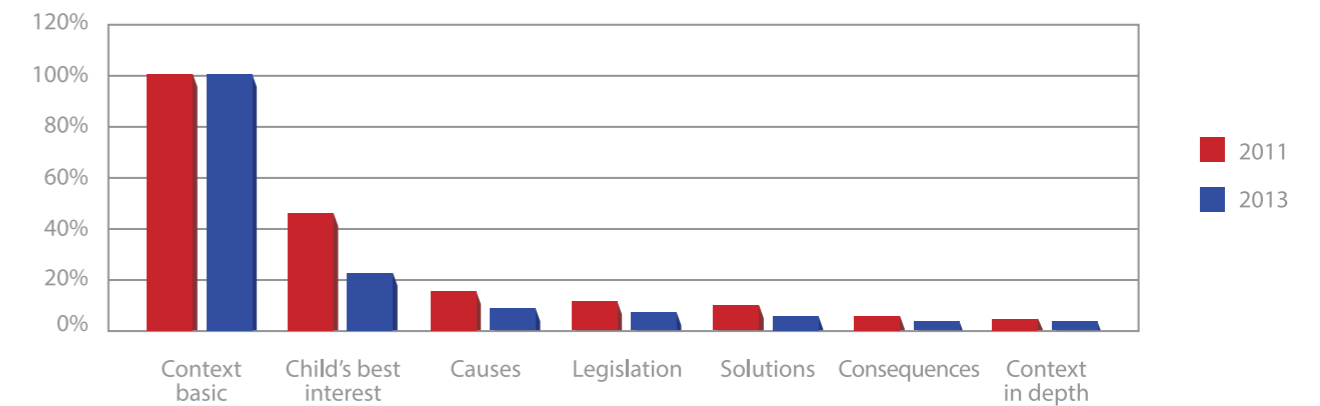
Therefore, in positive stories such as the above, children should always be given a voice as they are an essential part of the story.
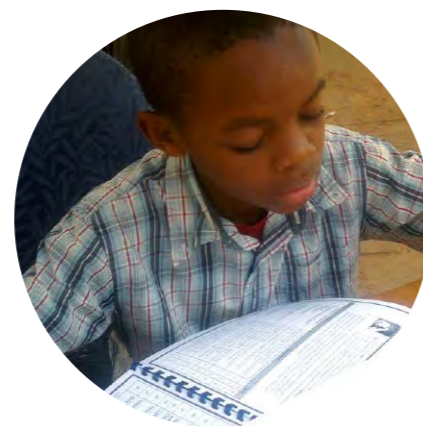
5.1.1.10 Quality of children's stories in the news

In order for the public to be well-informed on issues facing society, including those that affect children, media should provide information that is aimed at unpacking issues in their complexities. Context is also important in understanding where certain issues or events stem from as well as exploring possible solutions. News stories were therefore analysed during the monitoring period to determine the kind of information provided in news stories relating to children's issues.

Figure 30: Quality of children stories in the news

Legend: 2011 (red), 2013 (blue)

Categories: Context basic, Child's best interest, Causes, Legislation, Solutions, Consequences, Context in depth

As explained in the methodology section "Context basic" refers to basic information provided in a news story. Therefore it is expected that all monitored stories, as indicated on the graph, would have included this information.

When it came to providing more information beyond the basic on issues and events however, the findings revealed that Zambian media hardly provided in-depth information or explanations relating to children's stories or issues. Almost all the elements (consequences, solutions and legislation) used to determine the quality of information provided in the reporting of children's stories, halved in percentages since 2011.
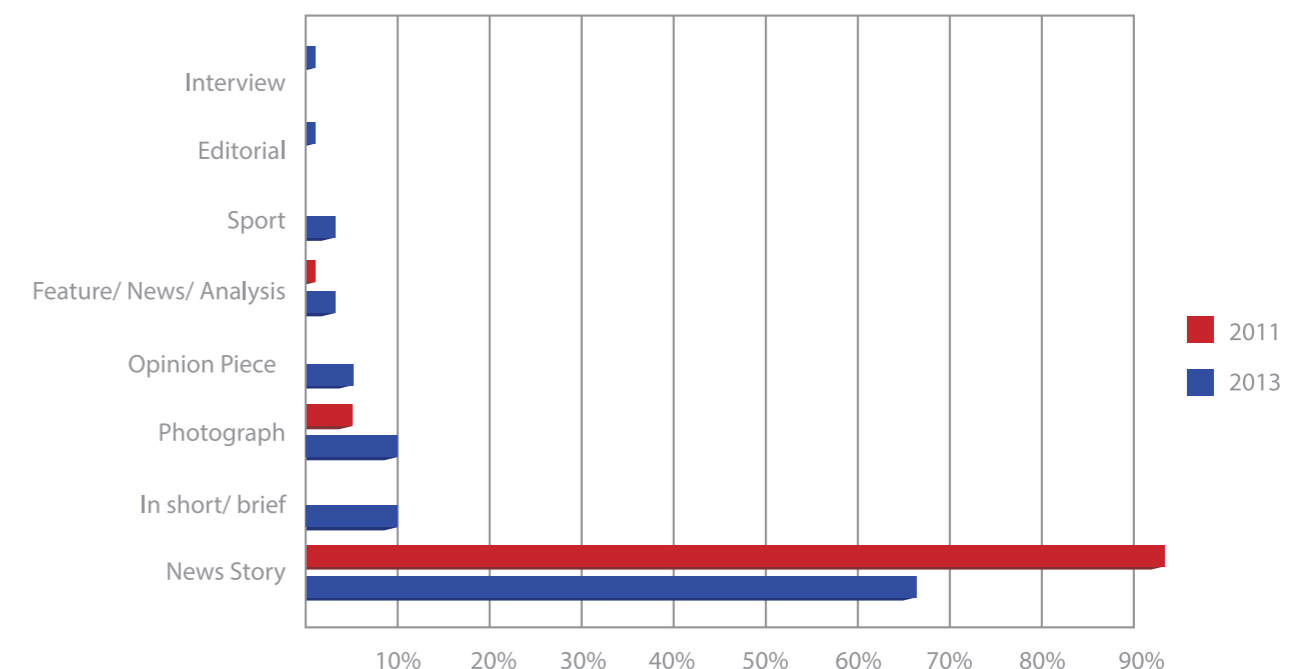
This also includes "Context in-depth", an indicator for background information provided at the least in a news story.

This is a concerning trend which points at the desperate need for Zambian media to providing more information on the complex issues facing children including exploring possible solutions to them.

5.1.1.11 Prominence of coverage

The format or styles of journalism in which children's stories are covered, such as news stories, features/news analysis, and the sequence in which stories appear in both news bulletins and newspaper pages help determine the prominence and value given to children and the issues that affect them in media coverage. Figure 31 shows the most frequent formats for children's stories.

Figure 31: Types of stories in the media

Legend: 2011 (red), 2013 (blue)

Categories: Interview, Editorial, Sport, Feature/ News/ Analysis, Opinion Piece, Photograph, In short/ brief, News Story

Children continued to be receive majority of coverage in news stories in 2013. This format is usually event-based, highly factual without much analysis and increased by 27 percent during the monitoring period. . While this is a sign that media are placing a focus on children's issues in current affairs, there is a need more nuanced reporting in formats such as interviews, editorials etc.

Features, a format which usually provides more analysis and insight into issues, saw a slight increase since 2011 but still remains quite low. This is indicated by the lack of solutions, causes and consequences afforded to children's issues in Zambian media as indicated on the previous page. When it came to the sequence in which children's stories appeared in newspapers, the findings revealed that most stories were published in six in 2013 and the first few pages of newspapers.

This is in stark contrast of the findings in 2013 where news stories were evenly spread throughout. When it came to the latter pages of the newspapers, the decline in children's stories declined.

These are the pages where more in depth analysis is provided in the form of editorials, opinion pieces, feature etc on children's issues which speaks to our findings as illustrated on the previous graph which show that Zambian media hardly unpack issues related to children.

Figure 32: Sequence of appearence in newspapers
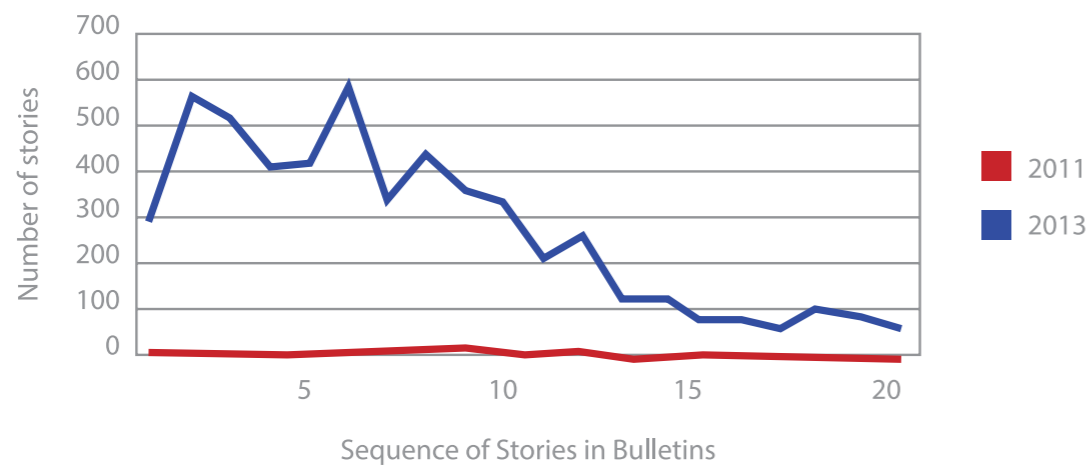
When it came to the appearance of children's stories in news bulletins, the findings revealed that Zambian broadcast media prioristised children's stories as they mostly appeared in the first few items of news bulletins. Media are encourged to continue this trend.

Figure 33: Sequence of appearance in bulletins
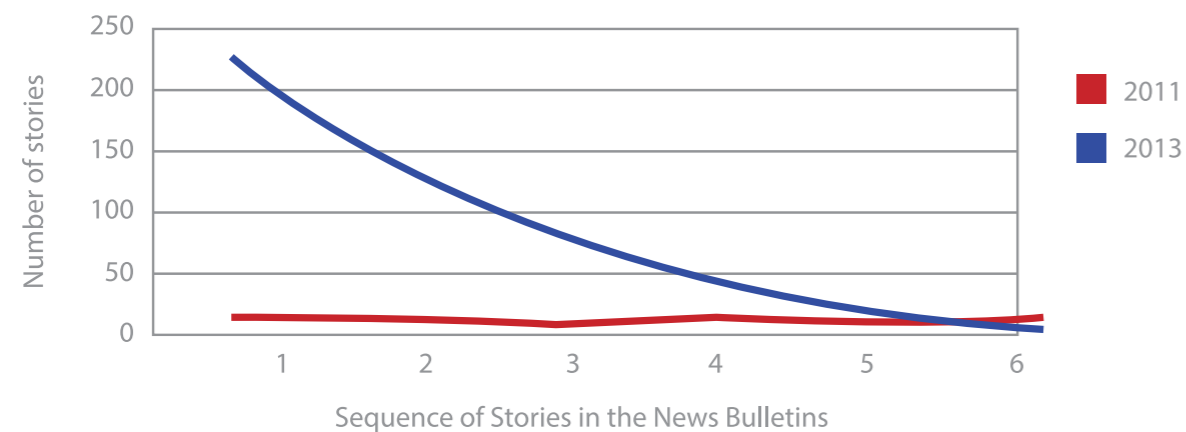
Media are encouraged to continue reporting on children in these formats as they provide more in depth information on issues facing children.

5.2 Children's Monitoring

The importance of children's access to the media and assessing how they are portrayed cannot be over emphasised as this gives children an opportunity to exercise their rights to participation and freedom of expression. The following section shows the results from the media monitoring conducted by Zambian children.

It must be noted that these children, just like the adults, monitored the 10 targeted media houses in Zambia for a period of five months in 2013. These results are compared to the 2012 findings and not to the 2011 findings as is the case with the adult monitoring.

5.2.1 Good vs. bad news reporting

One of the most important areas the children focused on was whether a story was well or badly reported. Here, they took into consideration the protection or violation of children's rights to privacy and freedom of expression as well as the best interests of children. The graph below shows the results.

Figure 34: Good Vs poor reporting
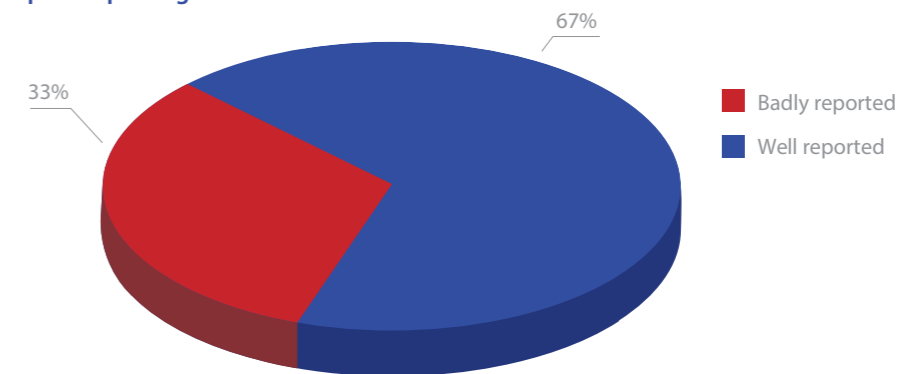
Out of the 181 stories monitored, the child monitors felt that 67 percent were well reported while 33 percent were badly reported. In 2012, well-reported stories stood at 63 percent while badly reported stories were at 37 percent.

While the four percent increase from 63 to 67 percent is commendable, the portion of badly reported stories is still large and the media need to report better on children to reduce this percentage. The media is encouraged to access children in positive stories, protect children's identities in negative stories and promote the best interests of children in their reporting.

5.2.2 Topics of the stories: What were stories about?

The children also monitored what the stories were about. A topic list was developed and given to children to select which topics were the most relevant and common in the media. The following graph reveals the most common topics assigned to children's stories in 2012.

Figure 35: What children's stories were about in 2012 and 2013
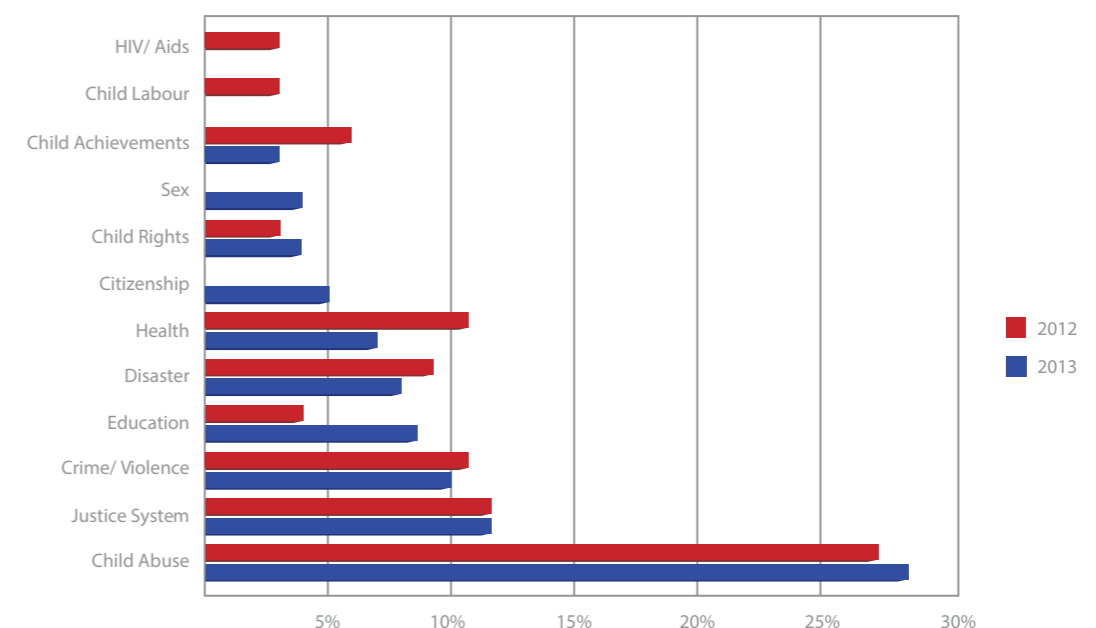
Child abuse was the most common topic in all the stories monitored by the children. Topics that saw an increase included justice system and education which saw an increase of four percent since 2012. The increases can be attributed to an increase in the coverage of stories in relation to these topics by the media. Media are encouraged to report on more positive stories that involve children and also those that show their capabilities and achievements.

5.2.3 Boys and girls coverage according to topics?

Monitoring gender verses roles helps determine in which topics boys and girls are featured. It must be noted that the following information was compiled through stories that clearly sourced either girls or boys, and also where the monitors could count the number of boys and girls in stories.
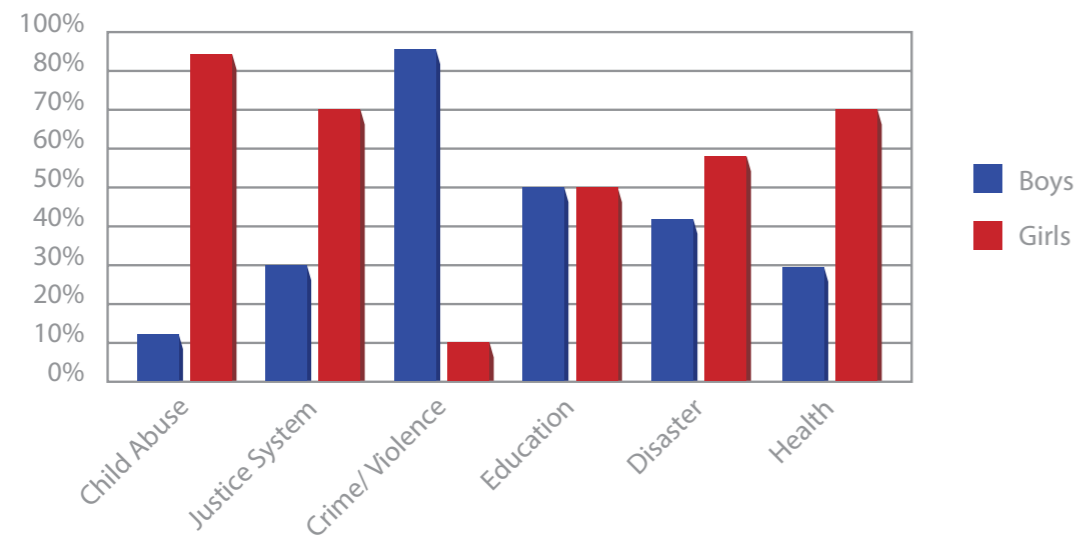
Figure 36: Topic by gender in 2013

Figure 36 shows that 88 percent of stories about girls were on child abuse while 12 percent of the stories were on boys. The percentage for girls has increased from 79 percent recorded in 2012. Justice System correlates to child abuse. This is because the justice system stories where girls appeared were mostly on court proceedings or judgments on sexual abuse against girls. This explains the 70 percent of stories about girls which have decreased from the 77 percent recorded in 2012. This decrease might be attributed to the fact that media have increased and concentrated their reporting on stories about justice were boys and not girls feature.

From Figure 33, it is evident that the media mostly report on girls in negative stories except when they are reporting on crimes perpetrated by children where boys appeared in 92 percent of the stories against the eight percent for girls. When girls appear in abuse stories more than boys, it shows that either the media only reports on stories about abuse when girls appear or that violence is mostly or only perpetrated against girls. Both mentioned cases especially the latter do not give a true picture and so media are encouraged to allocate an equitable gender representation when reporting on children.

5.2.4 Boys vs. Girls

The sourcing of boys and girls in stories by the media was also monitored. This was to determine the representation of these sexes in the media. Figure 37 shows the results.

Figure 37: Boys vs. Girls
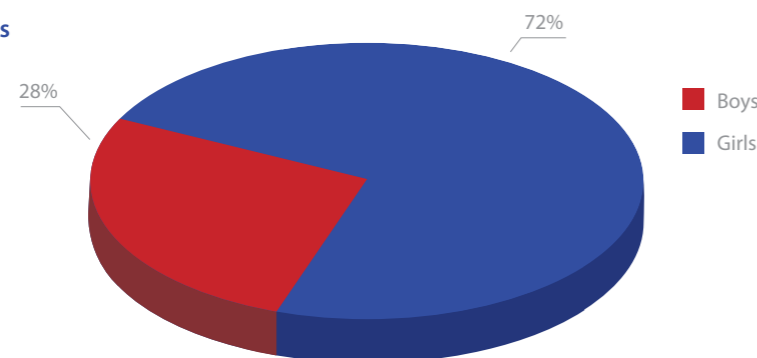
The result shows that girls were more sourced than boys in stories at 72 percent against the 28 percent for boys. In 2012, the percentages for girls and boys were 52 and 48 respectively. The percentage increase for girls might be because there were more stories on child abuse, the justice system and health where they featured more than the boys. The media are encouraged to strive to report on boys and girls equally to encourage the participation of both sexes.

5.2.5 Roles of children in the stories

How children are portrayed in the media gives an indication of roles which are typically assigned to children. Figure 38 shows the different roles children occupied in the news about them.

Figure 38: Top 5 roles in 2013
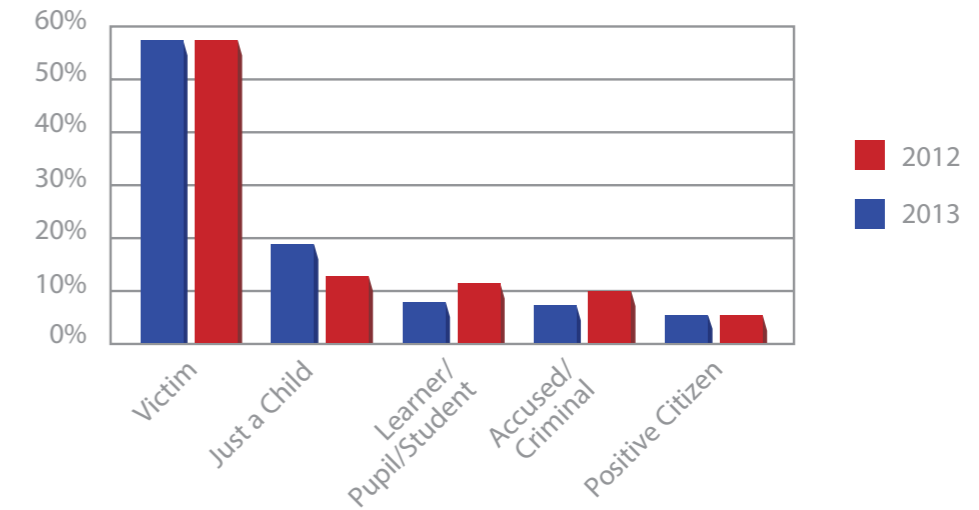
Children were mostly portrayed as victims during the monitoring period. While the percentage of the role of just a child has dropped from 19 percent in 2012 to 13 percent in 2013, the percentage for children as victims has remained at 57percent. Meanwhile there were fewer stories where children were mostly portrayed in a positive light.

The above results are an indication that the media mostly portray children in negative roles. Constantly portraying children in this manner can be disempowering. Therefore the media are encouraged to portray children as survivors of abuse for example in order to strengthen their personal ability to overcome circumstances. The media are also urged to show children in a diversity of roles especially those such as pupils or active citizens to close the gap between negative and positive roles occupied by children in the news.

5.2.6 Boys and girls coverage according to roles

Just as it is important to monitor which sexes featured in which topics in news, it is also important to monitor how the different sexes were portrayed in terms of roles they occupied in the media. Figure 39 shows which roles were most frequently assigned to boys and girls.

**Figure 39: Top 5 roles for boys and girls**
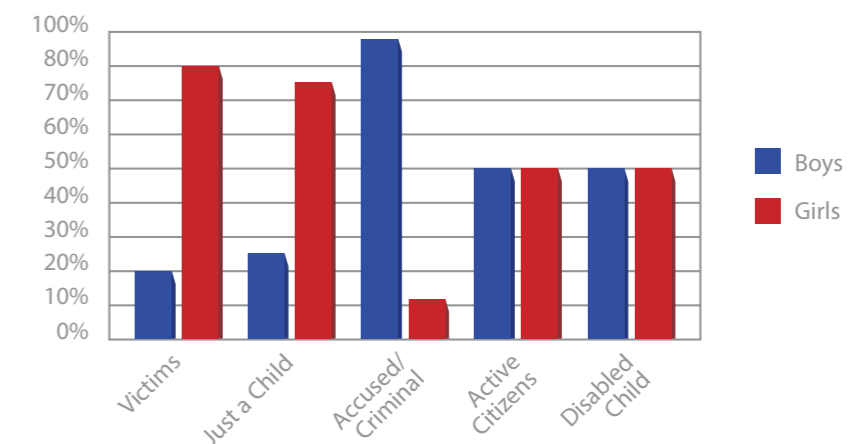
It is positively interesting to note that the role of active citizen which had been completely occupied by boys in 2012 is now shared equally with girls at 50 percent each. This is commendable as it shows efforts to get the media to portray boys and girls as positive citizens equally have not proved futile. Stories where children are portrayed merely as children with no definitive roles attached to them had girls occupying 75 percent with 25 percent for boys.

From the same results, we can see that girls were mostly portrayed as victims at 80 percent against the 20 percent for boys. Boys were mostly portrayed as accused/criminals at 89 percent against the 11 percent for girls. In 2012, girls as victims occupied 60 percent while boys as accused/criminal were at 99 percent. This poses a challenge to Zambian media to portray girls in more active rather than passive roles and to also challenge the common portrayal of boys in roles of delinquency.

5.2.7 How did children feel about the stories?

During monitoring, the children were asked to express their feelings about the way a story was reported. The following graph shows how children felt in relation to the monitored news stories.

Figure 40: How children feel about the stories

8%

68%

24%

- Glad/ Excited
- Sad/ Scared
- Mad/ Angry
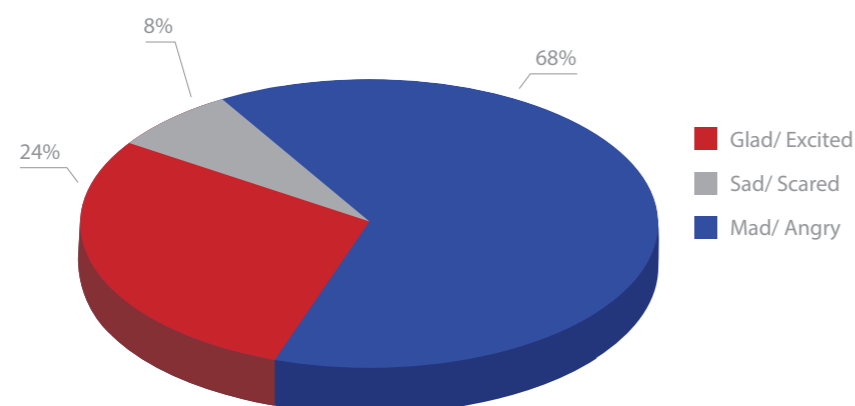
The results above show the children felt glad about the quality of reporting at 68 percent. This indicates the media protected or promoted children's rights in their reporting. In 2012, children felt that 65 percent of stories made them glad.

The children were mad/angry about the reporting at 24 percent and were sad/scared at eight percent. The media should strive to hugely improve their quality of reporting to increase the number of reports that children are happy to read and listen to in the media.

6. Conclusion

It goes without saying that South Africa and Zambia have stark variations in terms of the social, political and economic contexts. Despite these variations there are some commonalities that can be drawn, for one, both countries' children make up a considerable portion of the population. Also notably, the two countries are signatories of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child and the African Charter on the Welfare of the African Child. This fundamentally shows that both countries are committed to the promotion and protection of children's rights laid out in various articles of these conventions.

Since 2011, the monitoring findings have shown that South African and Zambian media's reporting of children is very disparate. Over the years Zambia has consistently had a lower number of children's stories compared to South Africa. This could be attributed to the number of media monitored in Zambia being far less compared to South Africa. Zambians have fewer daily newspapers. Despite this, there has been an increase in the number of children's stories that appeared in the media over the years from both countries. While this is commendable the percentage of children's stories compared to the overall number of stories in the media remains marginal. It is therefore clear that children's issues are still sidelined. The underrepresentation of children translates to the marginalisation of their issues. Notwithstanding that the exclusion of children in the media is a denial of their fundamental rights to participation and freedom of expression. Children as cliché as it may sound, are the future and how we treat them today sets a benchmark for how they will behave tomorrow. Thus if treated like nonentities children are likely to formulate their identities and the decisions that they make in future with the same frame of mind. Children's development of their valuable civic identities, to a certain extent, depends on how they are portrayed in the media.

Evidently, the way children are being portrayed in the media remains a challenge. This is especially clear in Zambia where children are mostly portrayed as victims. This is related to common child sexual abuse that is widespread in the country.[35] However in South Africa "just a child" has been the constantly dominant role in which children are represented.

It was also apparent in the findings that the lack of children's voices in South African and Zambian media is still a major challenge. The monitoring findings indicate that for the most part, children are spoken of and not spoken to in the media. .Children have valuable insights to offer especially on issues that affect them; hence there exists a need for the media to invest in giving children a voice and engaging them as active agents in stories that involve them.

In terms of children's rights violation, media in Zambia have shown an improvement in the protection of children. Since 2011 they have violated fewer children's rights compared to South Africa. In 2011, Zambia violated children's rights three percent of the time and one percent in 2013. South Africa violated children's rights two per cent of the time in 2011 and four percent in 2013. The difference in violation can be attributed to the quantity of the stories that both countries monitored.

In addition, child monitors in South Africa and Zambia have had a negative assessment of how the media sees them. They believe the media is not representing them in a positive way, which makes them "angry" and "sad."

While significant progress has been made over the last three years, the monitoring findings of the South African and Zambian media's coverage of children show that media in these countries still face major challenges in promoting and protecting children's rights. They also confirm that far more still needs to be done to ensure that children's rights are realised in the media. Journalists have an important role to play in how children are represented.

The overarching aim of this research has been to provide a catalyst that will inspire a range of media in South Africa and Zambia to reflect on their roles and their responsibilities in terms of realising children's rights and integrating principles of ethical reporting of children into their work. It is hoped that this research will succeed in generating civic and media discussions around the linkage between the media, children and children's rights, and that this will be taken forward in developing a child-centred and rights-based approach on the coverage of children and children's issues. Suffice to say that the media's portrayal of children plays a key role in how children view themselves and how they are in turn viewed by the public.

> "The way the media portray children has a profound impact on society's attitude to children and childhood, which also affects the way adults behave. Even the images children themselves see, especially of sex and violence, influence their expectation of their roles in life." [36]

35. http://humanrights.dk/files/pdf/Engelsk/Research/RPP/Lungowe_report_OK.pdf
36. Children, Ethics and the Media"- a report by Save the Children Alliance for UNCRC

7. Recommendations

Going forward, the monitoring findings revealed in this report offer valuable lessons and insights to improving coverage of children in the media. Below are recommendations for the media in this regard:

• Media in Zambia and South Africa are encouraged to increase the coverage of children and their issues especially since they constitute the majority of the population in both countries.

• While the percentage of children's right violations in the media may be seemingly low when translated into numbers it can be quite high. Media are therefore encouraged to aim towards zero violations of children's rights.

• Media are encourages to treat children as central sources in stories and to give them an identity and voice when it is in their best interests to do so.

• Media should also challenge limited and stereotypical portrayals of children and show them in diverse and more active and empowering roles.

• Boys and girls and girls should also be equally represented in the media. This also applies for different ages groups.

• Media are encouraged to continue reporting on the challenges facing children but to also include diverse topics which also show a more positive side to children.

• Media should also give prominence to children and their issues and should cover children more in news reporting formats which offer more in-depth analysis on their issues.

• Child media monitors indicated how media made them feel mad and angry about the way they represented them. Media are therefore encouraged to improve overall reporting in order for children to feel like they are fairly represented in the media.

While not exhaustive we recommend that media houses adopt MMA's Guidelines and Principles for Reporting on Children in the Media and should also take the following measures towards improving their coverage of children and children's issues:

• Media should be encouraged to generate stories about children rather than rely on newsworthy events to happen before covering children's stories.

• When writing about children, journalists should engage with them as much as possible but at the same time exercise caution in dealing with children whose rights have been violated.

• Journalists should ensure that stories about children are accompanied by information that will help empower children and address their issues.

• Journalists should rely more often on analysis, interviews and opinion pieces which could allow them greater space to report children's issues in a more comprehensive and in-depth manner.

Children & media: Championing best practice

Appendix 1: MAD OAT criteria

	Headline
1	The headline is clearly in the best interest of the child
2	The headline clearly supports stereotypes about children
3	The headline is representative of the content of the story
	Image
1	The image is in the best interest of the child
2	The Image clearly supports stereotypes about children
3	The image is representative of the story
	Article
1	The article has brought attention to children's rights and related issues (Early childhood development, the Millennium Development Goals, basic nutrition for children, vaccination or challenges to the girl child)
2	The article raises awareness of the prevention of drug abuse/child abuse/sexual offences and or HIV among young people
3	The article is published in the best interest of children
	Sources
1	Relevant sources, such as parents/guardian/welfare group have been used in article
	Identity
1	The privacy/identity and HIV status of the child has been sufficiently protected where in the child's interest
	Abuse
1	The child has been abused
The Times	Newspaper

Appendix 2: Qualities of stories criteria

CB	Context basic: Does it mention the basic details about what happened and how, where, who was involved?
CI	Context in-depth: Is the story given greater context? Does it talk about the broader social consequences? Does it talk about tragic accidents as recurring patterns?
Y	Causes: Does the story explain the causes of the event?
O	Consequences: Does the story describe the consequences of the event or how it impacts on broader society?
S	Solutions: Does the story offer any possible solutions or means of addressing the problems?
L	Relevant legislation: Does the story mention any relevant legislation or policy?
SH	Self Help: Does the story provide information to help the reader e.g.: in a drug abuse story, does it give information on where to go to get help for drug addiction, in terms of a sexual abuse or child abuse story, where can anyone go or phone to receive help. Does the article provide tool bars (such as columns, graphs or tables) to detect signs of child abuse/sexual abuse/drug abuse etc. Does the story provide information necessary to make an informed self help story?
CBI	Child's Best Interest: Is the story in the child's best interest? Is the story beneficial to the child or not? Is the child portrayed in a positive light?
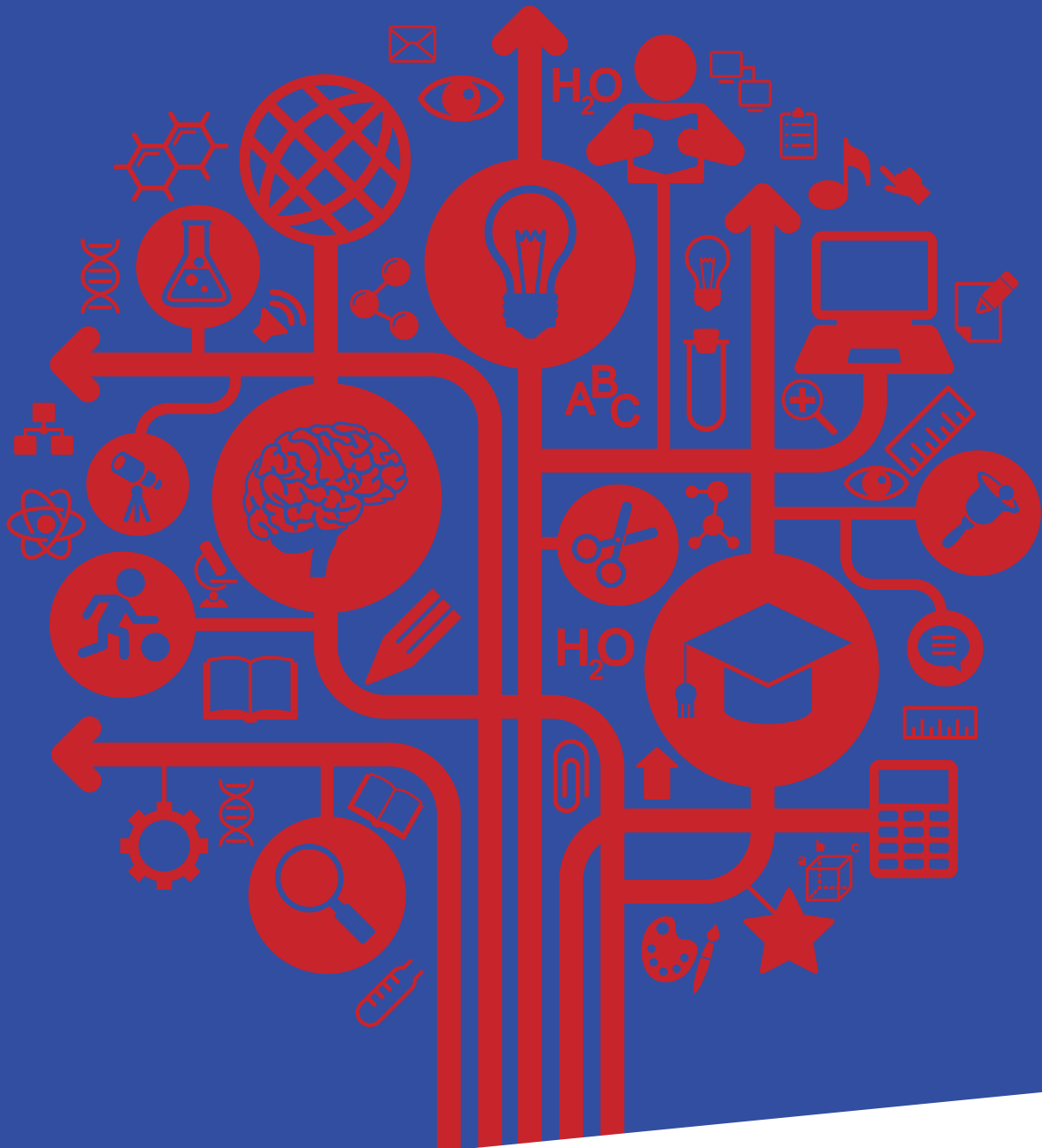
Media Monitoring Africa (MMA)

Physical Address

Suite No22, Art Centre
6th Street
Parkhurst
Johannesburg
South Africa

Postal address

PO Box 1560
Parklands 2121
South Africa

Contact Information

Tel: +27 (0)11 788 1278
Fax: +27(0)11 788 1289
Email: info@mma.org.za

Media Network on Child Rights and Development (MNCRD)

Physical address

2378 Pemba Road
Chilenje South
Lusaka
Zambia

Postal address

PO Box 38540
Lusaka 10101
Zambia

Contact information

Tel: +26(0)211 250023
Email:Medianetcrd@gmail.com