

Institution: Newcastle University		
Unit of Assessment: 34 Communication, Cultural and Media Studies, Library and Information Management		
Title of case study: Advancing Gender Equality in Media Industries		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2016-2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Karen Ross	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Professor of Gender and Media	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: May 2016-
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2018-2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>Advancing Gender Equality in Media Industries (AGEMI) is a web-based, research-driven and globally-focused resource which comprises curated and created materials: the primary impacts are on understanding, learning and participation (amongst students, civil society and media professionals); and influencing media professionals (journalists). AGEMI resources have been used in university and non-university education and training contexts with young people and media professionals in a range of workshops and courses across several continents, generating positive and transformative feedback which we discuss in Section 4. It is listed as a good practice resource in publications aimed at educators, and on the websites of European and global NGOs and media unions as well as the UK Association of Journalism Education</p>		
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>The research that underpins the impact in terms of the development of the AGEMI web platform and resources, is the body of work undertaken by Ross over the past 30 years, including since Ross has been employed at Newcastle University (2016-). Her international reputation played a key role in the consortium she led being awarded an EU-funded grant to develop AGEMI in 2016. This was also the primary reason for winning a large commission from the European Institute for Gender Equality, to undertake the research which produced some of the publications mentioned in Section 3 below, specifically Pubs 2 and 3. That research, led by Ross, was the first substantial effort to explore the extent to which women held management and leadership positions in large-scale media organisations headquartered in all 28 EU member states, including all the public service broadcasters in those countries (39 in total since some countries have separate organisations for TV and radio), together with a further 60 private sector media outlets comprising radio and TV stations as well as newspapers. The research monitored one week of TV broadcasts across 56 TV stations (one PSB and one commercial) which remains the largest media monitoring effort ever undertaken across all the EU member states.</p> <p>Members of the team which Ross brought together have contributed to the Resources Bank of Good Practices which is an integral part of the AGEMI platform, and the findings from the research (including stereotyped gendered portrayal, macho newsroom environments and stunted career trajectories for women media workers) informed the development of several of the learning units, in particular unit 2 (representation), unit 4 (newsroom cultures) and unit 5 (women and leadership). Contacts made in that work led to a number of media professionals agreeing to be interviewed for AGEMI's GEMTalks section. Pub 5 relates to the ongoing Global Media Monitoring Project which is the most comprehensive, longitudinal global analysis of news media which started in 1995 and data are gathered during one day every five years, the last time being in 2020. Ross has been the UK coordinator since 2005 and the European Coordinator since 2010. The findings from GMMP research</p>		

and her current research activities continue to focus on the gendered nature of news content, especially in relation to women politicians (**Pub 6**) (including work on the reporting of Jacinda Ardern and Angela Merkel during Covid-19), explore gendered language strategies, story skew and trivialisation, and informed the development of units 2, 3 and 5 of the AGEMI learning materials as well as contributing to the Resources Bank of Good Practices and the app. Her current work looking at social media messaging amongst women and men politicians contributed to the development of units 3 and 8 of the AGEMI learning materials. **Publications 1 and 4** were produced during the development of AGEMI and constitute the first publications to arise directly from the AGEMI project, informed by the first phase of the project and in particular, the Summer School and Internships which enabled Ross and Padovani (AGEMI's main Col) to reflect on the pedagogic value of bringing media students and media practitioners from different cultures into dialogue with each other.

3. References to the research

The development of the AGEMI resources has been informed by decades of research which has been undertaken by the three university partners, which has focused on gender inequality in the media. The following publications are a selection published by AGEMI Lead, Karen Ross. All except Pub 6 have been peer-reviewed, both journal articles and those appearing as chapters in edited collections. Pubs 1 and 2 are published and endorsed by UNESCO. Pub 6 is published by ECREA.

1. (2020) Ideas for gender-transformative futures of education in the digital age, pp153-156 (w Claudia Padovani). In UNESCO (ed). *Humanistic Futures of Learning*. UNESCO: Paris. ISBN 9789231003691: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000372577.locale=en>
2. (2019) A hard ladder to climb: women and power in media industries, pp 35-44. In Aimee Vega Montiel and Sarah Macharia (eds) *Setting the Gender Agenda for Communication Policy*. Paris: UNESCO. ISBN 9789231003219: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000368962.locale=en>
3. (2019) Getting to the top: women and decision-making in European media industries, pp 3-17. In Cindy Carter, Linda Steiner and Stuart Allan (eds.) *Journalism, Gender and Power*. Routledge. ISBN 9781138895362: <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315179520>
4. (2018) Advancing gender equality in media industries: an innovative European approach (w Claudia Padovani). *Interdisciplina* 17(7): 87-98. DOI: 10.22201/ceiich.24485705e.2019.17.67521
5. (2018) Women, men and news: it's life Jim, but not as we know it (w Karen Boyle, Cynthia Carter and Debbie Ging). *Journalism Studies* 19(6): 824-845: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2016.1222884>
6. (2017) *Gender, Politics, News: A Game of Three Sides*. Wiley Blackwell. ISBN 9781118561591: DOI:10.1002/9781118561652

EU grant details:

JUST/2015/RGEN/AG/ROLE/9634 – Newcastle University: total value - **EUR435,397.66**

4. Details of the impact

AGEMI (February 2017-July 2019) is a project originally funded by the European Commission (DG Justice and Consumers) under their Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme. It was explicitly funded as an *Action Project* which would draw on extant research to develop an initiative which could impact gender inequalities in the media. The AGEMI consortium comprised three university partners (Newcastle as Lead, Padova and Gothenburg) and two media unions: European Federation of Journalists and COPEAM (Permanent Conference of Mediterranean Audiovisual Operators) since our primary intention was to develop resources which would not only enhance awareness of gender inequalities amongst journalism students (and thus encourage a more gender-sensitive approach to their practice), but would also be a useful resource for media professionals.

AGEMI has four major elements: a) Resources Bank of Good Practices; b) set of learning units; c) student-practitioner encounters; d) app. AGEMI has been presented at numerous academic and practitioner conferences since 2018, and had its official launch in February 2018 at the Press Club in Brussels, attended by journalists, NGOs, MEPs and European Commission staff. All the resources are free to download and repurpose. As at 31 December 2020, the site has had 205,599 page views, plus another 14,000 views and 86,000 page impressions on the AGEMI YouTube Channel. In their end-of-project review, the European Commission's letter attests that the project has been impactful and will continue to have further impacts over time. *"The activities of this project were successfully implemented and are very impactful. The project was fruitful in increasing awareness on gender inequality in the media and pushed students to engage in a professional practice that embedded gender sensitivity, diversity and intersectionality."* (SOURCE 1)

We are claiming **two categories of impact**:

A Impacts on understanding, learning and participation, primarily, an increased understanding and **awareness of gender roles** through the education and training of students and other young people, civil society and media professionals (journalists), with three sub-claims, that AGEMI has: **A1** Influenced the design and delivery of curriculum and syllabi in HEIs; **A2** Influenced the design and delivery of curriculum and syllabi in non-vocational courses; and **A3** Influenced the design and delivery of curriculum and syllabi for members of civil society; and **B** Impacts on practitioners through influencing the continuing personal and professional training of journalists.

We discuss and evidence each of these impacts in turn below.

A1 - Impacts on HE journalism students taking formal courses

AGEMI was required to commission an independent evaluation of the project from the very beginning and the evaluator commented that the project was successful in raising awareness of gender equality issues and encouraging a more gender-inclusive journalism. She said: *"Overall, it was clear that for all the students, the major impact in terms of learning was a raised awareness of gender inequalities in the media and a commitment to practice gender-sensitive journalism in their future work. Some respondents said they will now consider gender and age when doing interviews and think about ways to provide and portray a woman's perspective, having learned from the experiences of others what a 'gender oriented' view is, along with tips on how to work toward gaining more equal representation across the industry."* (SOURCE 2)

Members of the AGEMI consortium, including Ross, have run a series of workshops to promote and walk through the AGEMI resources with different audiences, including educators, media professionals and students. In terms of the latter, one typical workshop was held in January 2020 at the University of Malta and the local host (Head of Department) said: *"The students really enjoyed your visit, and working through the different aspects of the platform has prompted further explorations of the resources beyond your visit. Putting so many resources together in one place makes your suggestion that it's a one-stop-shop for raising awareness around gender equality issues in the media completely justified and I expect its impact to be wide-reaching and significant. It's definitely already raised awareness of the broad issues of gender in/equality amongst the students."*

The AGEMI resources have also been integrated in at least two (that we know of) current University courses, at the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), New York and the Institute of Journalism and Communication Science at the University of Vienna. The colleagues who have used the materials have been very positive about their quality and utility in raising awareness of gender in/equality and media issues amongst students. The course leader at RIT said: *"I used both the website and the app in ...a module focusing on representations of gender and race that commonly*

appear in Hollywood films. I found that the materials on the AGEMI website provided excellent ancillary resources. In an exercise in class, we searched for newspaper stories covering topics related to Hollywood, and then used the app to code them. The results provided a good foundation for an in-class discussion. I intend to use the website and the app again this academic year, when I teach a course in Gender and Communication.” (SOURCE 3)

Focusing more explicitly on the examples included in the project’s Resources Bank of Good Practices as part of a semester-long action research and learning project around gender mainstreaming, the course leader said that student learning was enhanced and awareness raised about gender inequalities through their engagement with the AGEMI resources: *“The analyses of the individual learning journals of the students (n 57) filled out throughout the semester delivered meaningful results about self-identification, engagement and mobilization as a matter of social reflection and responsiveness to inequalities.”* (course leader, Institute of Journalism and Communication Science at the University of Vienna). AGEMI appears as a good practice project on the website of the (UK) Association of Journalism Education (SOURCE 4). It also features as an exemplar in two academic texts focused on media and journalism education (SOURCE 5).

A2 - Impacts on young people taking non-vocational courses

The AGEMI learning units formed the exclusive basis of two online courses delivered by the NGO, Sharing Perspectives, as part of an EU-funded digital learning initiative, Erasmus Virtual Exchange, with a total of 636 learners registered (314 in 2019 and 322 in 2020), some of whom are university students but most are not. The primary impacts on course participants were awareness-raising and changed behaviour, together with some multiplier effects where learners discussed the issues they were accessing with peers and family, thus embedding new learning in their everyday lives.

The Director of Sharing Perspectives said: *“It is clear that the course content was very effective in raising awareness of a range of inequality issues in the media which are gendered, with 80% of students saying the content was ‘very’ effective in raising such awareness and 19% saying it was ‘somewhat’ effective.”* His letter also includes some direct quotes from participants: *“The experience gave me the chance to enhance my knowledge about women in not only in the Arab world but also in the western world. As a woman, before starting this virtual exchange, I had no idea about what women are experiencing in the media industry such as sexual harassment, violence and discrimination but through the discussion and lectures my knowledge deepened and I became more aware.”* (woman, Tunisia); *“I learnt that gender inequality does exist and I play a role in it. It makes me more conscious of my own decisions and how I should behave as a future female journalist and do not let gender negotiate my career.”* (woman, Ireland) (SOURCE 6)

A3 – Impacts on civil society

The AGEMI resources have also been integrated into a Diploma in Communication, Gender and Human Rights which is jointly delivered by the Argentinian NGO, *Asociación Civil Comunicación para la Igualdad* (Communication for Equality) and the Inter-American Commission of Women, and is supported by UNESCO. Approximately 35 people have completed the version of the course which includes the AGEMI resources. The President of the CfE said that the resources, *“...are extremely useful for advancing/progressing the communication and gender agenda both at a local and global level.”*

The media-monitoring app which is the most obviously interactive aspect of the AGEMI project is available to download for both iPhone and Android. As well as being used by RIT students (as above), it was also used in some countries as part of the training for participants in the 2020 iteration of the Global Media Monitoring Project

and the coordinator of the GMMP said: *“I have also encouraged the coordinators to download the AGEMI app because its simplicity makes it an ideal tool for national team members who are new to media monitoring, especially those working in community rather than in education, as well as constituting a useful ice-breaker for team training more generally.”* AGEMI appears as a good practice resource on the European Institute for Gender Equality’s web pages under gender mainstreaming. **(SOURCE 7).**

B - Impacts on journalism practice

One of the project partners is the European Federation of Journalists (EFJ) who suggest that journalists have had their awareness-raised about gender equality, particularly in relation to understanding more about positive responses to challenging same, through their exposure to the AGEMI resources during professional development activities and practitioner conference workshops which have taken place over the period 2018-2020. AGEMI is a permanent feature on the EFJ’s Equality and Diversity pages: implicit endorsement of the AGEMI project gives confidence to journalists that the resources are meaningful. The EFJ General Secretary said: *“...we have encouraged journalist trainers to integrate AGEMI resources into their local and national training activities, particularly the filmed interviews with women journalists and the learning units which focus specifically on employment issues around newsroom cultures and anecdotal feedback suggests that such resources have had an impact in raising awareness around gender equality, not least because they are research and evidence-based with a lot of concrete, real-life examples, which I hope will, in turn, lead to a more gender-sensitive professional practice. That is my hope anyway!”* **(SOURCE 8)**

The Permanent Conference of Mediterranean Audiovisual Operators (COPEAM), which is the broadcasting union for media practitioners working in the Mediterranean region, has been awarded funding from the Council of Europe to organise training for journalists and NGOs based on the AGEMI materials **(SOURCE 9).**

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

SOURCE 1 - Director-General of DG Equality and Consumers ([letter provided](#))

SOURCE 2 – Independent AGEMI Project Evaluator ([letter provided](#))

SOURCE 3 - Course Leader, School of Communication, RIT ([letter provided](#))

SOURCE 4 - AGEMI is listed as a relevant new resource on the website of the Association of Journalism Education, providing materials for journalism educators to integrate into their own teaching. [weblink](#)

SOURCE 5 - AGEMI is listed as a relevant new resource in two academic texts published by UNESCO as part of its UNESCO series on Journalism Education: i) Aimee Vega Montiel and Sarah Macharia (eds.) *Setting the Gender Agenda for Communication Policy*. Paris: UNESCO, p129; ii) Lisa French and Aimee Vega Montiel (eds.) *Gender, Media and ICTs: New Approaches for Research, Education and Training*. Paris: UNESCO, p99 and 111. Both are free to download. [weblink](#)

SOURCE 6 - Director, Sharing Perspectives ([letter provided](#))

SOURCE 7 - AGEMI is included as a resource on the European Institute for Gender Equality’s website, under Gender Mainstreaming Tools and Methods: awareness-raising; providing new tools and resources; changing policy and practice. [weblink](#)

SOURCE 8 - General Secretary of the European Federation of Journalists ([letter provided](#))

SOURCE 9 – Funding agreement between the Council of Europe and COPEAM ([document provided](#)).