



# Media Coverage Analysis in Women Climate Change Adaptation

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## Abstract

Zanzibar, an archipelago consisting of more than 50 islands, is highly affected by climate change. Around 150 sites on the islands have been identified as being affected by saltwater intrusion and are now not suitable for agriculture. This has contributed to food insecurity, lack of access to land and an increase in the unemployment rate affecting mostly marginalized women who are largely dependent on rainfall. On the other hand, women have been at the core front addressing climate change hazards albeit, unknowingly. This includes forest patrolling, mixed farming and mangrove plantation. Yet, their role and actions are not taken into consideration, not even reported in the media houses. This research has found a glaring gap of reports in the media houses. Out of 608 issues reviewed, only 34 (5.5%) articles addressed women leadership and climate change adaptation featuring particularly women minister and the President of the United Republic of Tanzania. The research has conducted media reviews, interviews with climate change actors and Focus Group Discussion with journalists & editors in Zanzibar. The research has therefore recommended women full recognition of their role and media coverage of their active and leadership role in addressing the climate change hazards and be part of the national agenda. This will therefore be the game changer addressing climate change issues in all its spheres; policy, budget level, transparency and accountability.

**Keywords:** accountability, community, stories, leadership, seawater

## 1. Introduction

Climate change stands as one of the most pressing global challenges. Small island nations, such as Zanzibar, bear a disproportionate burden of its impacts, primarily due to the pervasive issues of poverty and overreliance on manual agriculture, fishing, and tourism. While efforts have been made to implement escalated measures to combat this crisis, the adverse effects remain substantial. This calls for further efforts and the adoption of diverse approaches moving forward. Additionally, Zanzibar is legally obligated to adhere to international, regional, and national strategies adopted over time, and it must respond to climate change issues in a participatory, accountable, and transparent manner.

Women constitute a significant portion of Zanzibar's population, actively engaging in socio-economic activities at the community level, including climate change adaptation efforts. However, their contributions are often understated and underrepresented. This research conducts a media coverage analysis to assess journalists reporting in women adaptation to climate change.

The study comprises six main sections: an introduction to the problem, a theoretical framework, a literature review, a methodology section primarily employing a triangulation approach involving media analysis, interviews with women and consultations with stakeholders from both state and non-state sectors followed by findings and conclusions. The research investigates the gaps in the representation of women, the structuring of their stories, and the overall relationship between women and journalists, particularly in communities where climate change adaptation interventions have been most profound.

## **2. Background**

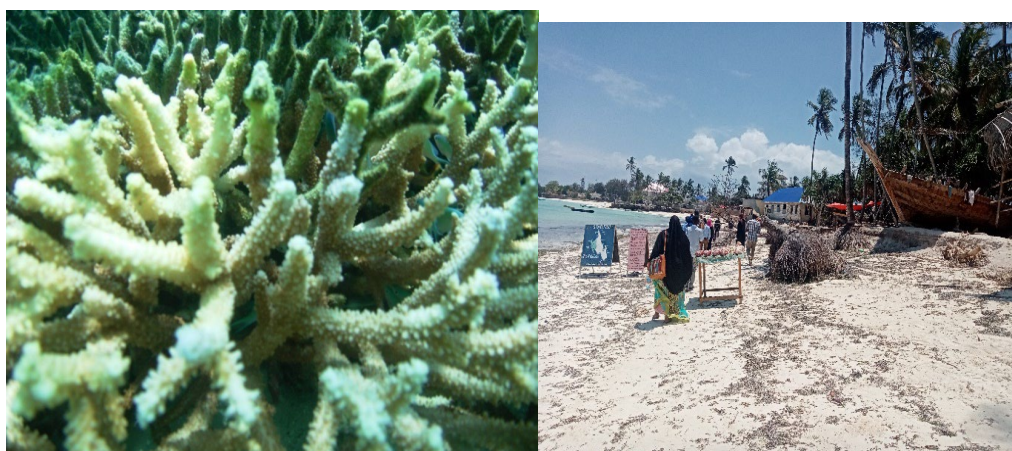
As the global climate crisis deepens, the demand for immediate action has grown exponentially. Zanzibar, a small island situated in a low-lying coastal area, is particularly susceptible to these challenges. The seminal study conducted by The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, UK AID and the Global Climate Adaptation (2012, p.8) raised significant concerns regarding the island's economic dependence on climate-sensitive industries such as agriculture, aquaculture, and tourism sectors that are highly vulnerable to fluctuations in weather patterns and climate conditions. This study highlighted the increasing severity of the effects of climate variability. It reported that a total of 148 villages has already been impacted by rising sea levels. The affected villages have currently increased due to limited measures taken. In 2018 through the Zanzibar Climate Change Atlas for Impacts of Saltwater Intrusion Data Base series 1, the government found major damage to the Jozani area which for years valued as the major reserved forest in the country. The reports stated that the area has about 30 acres already totally intruded by sea water recently and forcing some 13 out of 30 to migrate to other side of the area to avoid overflowing during high tide. Additionally, the report noted that two wells, which had previously provided fresh drinking water for the past 30 years, are no longer sources of fresh water.

In addition, human activities, such as destructive fishing methods, habitat destruction, resource overexploitation, and pollution, exacerbate the situation. Meteorological data over the past 30 years show a clear trend of rising air temperatures, with significant increases in both average and maximum temperatures from December to May. This is manifested in various forms, including rainfall variability, changes in wind patterns and wave conditions, alterations in the climate regime, extreme weather events, increasing wind speeds and wave heights, habitat inundation, shoreline erosion, and saline intrusion into groundwater and soil in recent years (Shaghude, 2008; UKAID & Global Climate Adaptation Study 2012, Jiddawi & Shaghude, 2012; Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, 2023).

Given these challenges, it is essential to highlight the role of more actors, especially women, who often bear the brunt of poverty and natural disasters. However, investment in women's climate-related activities is still minimal globally. Despite climate finance flows exceeding USD 600 billion in 2021, only 2 percent of these funds incorporated a gender perspective—a significant shortfall in financing inclusive climate solutions (Climate Equality Gender Fund, 2021, p.3). If this is the global trend, the situation for women in Zanzibar, who are more marginalized and impoverished, is even more dire. The World Bank Assessment (2022, p.14) revealed that men's incomes in Zanzibar are substantially higher than women's, with men earning three times more than women in both urban and rural areas.

Despite their disadvantaged status, women are at the forefront of volunteerism, innovation, and dedication within their communities. Their contributions to climate change adaptation need to be clearly recognized. The media, as the primary intermediary between the community and the state, plays a crucial role in shaping public understanding, yet its impact on women's climate adaptation efforts remains underexplored. Wanyande (1996, p.49) states that media, by its very nature, is public-oriented and has the capacity to reach a larger audience more effectively than any other form of communication. With the rise of private media and social media, Zanzibar has seen a surge in media outlets, including 26 radio stations, 50 online platforms, one local newspaper, as well as 12 newspapers from Tanzania mainland and 16 television stations (Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, 2024, p.2).

This study, therefore, seeks to examine the role of media platforms in women's climate change adaptation through a two-pronged approach: first, assessing how proactively the media have covered women's stories, and second, evaluating the extent to which women have utilized these expanding media spaces to enhanced climate adaptation efforts.



*Figure 1. left shows coral reefs bleaching and coastal erosion on the right (Pictures from the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar (2018) “Zanzibar Climate Change Atlas for Impacts of Saltwater Intrusion” Data Base series 1”.*

### **3. Objectives**

The primary objective of the Media Coverage Analysis is:

To see gap that exists between media interventions and women climate change adaptation and how it can be bridged to trigger more results.

#### **3.1 Specific Objectives**

1. To establish as baseline information on the quality and quantity of media stories related to women's position in climate change adaptation.
2. To analyze information gathered in climate adaptation from women's point of view with its strength and gaps.
3. To provide pathways for improving qualitative and quantitative media coverage on issues related to women's representation in the media regarding women's leadership in nature-based climate adaptation in Zanzibar.

#### **4. Literature Review**

Most of the literature on women in climate change adaptation focuses primarily on agriculture and aquaculture, with little attention given to their voices and leadership potential. Studies have not explored climate change adaptation from the media's perspective, nor have they acknowledged women as potential advocates for addressing escalating climate threats.

Charisiadou et al. (2022) noted that seaweed farming is predominantly carried out by women, but they face numerous challenges, including limited market access, low prices in relation to labor and costs, escalating equipment prices, and low-income returns. The research identified that these issues arose due to a lack of collective action within the seaweed farming community. It suggested that a more unified approach could improve both their income levels and environmental sustainability.

Dogeje et al. (2025) examined women's participation in seaweed aquaculture and its impact on their income. The study found that women account for about 80% of seaweed farming, employing over 12,903 people. However, it also revealed a significant negative relationship between participation in seaweed farming and higher income, reinforcing the long-standing assumption that women work harder but earn less. This contradicts the theoretical expectation that there would be a positive correlation between seaweed production and income growth.

Matoju et al. (2022) and Msuya et al. (2022) supported this finding, citing issues like the lack of institutional support, market obstacles, and the high cost of equipment such as tie-tie ropes and stakes, which exacerbate the problem. This underscores the purpose of this study, to examine how well women are organized and how effectively they voice their struggles, with the media serving as a crucial platform for such expression.

Notwithstanding the economic aspect of women, the seaweed farming poses also potential damage to the sea ecology; change fish species composition and diminishes underwater vegetation important for fisheries and stabilizing ecosystem services De la Torre-Castro and Ronnback, 2004; Eklöf et al., 2005, (Eklöf et al., 2006, as quoted by De la Torre-Castro et al 2022).

Regarding the climate change adaptation to women, De la Torre-Castro et al 2022 came up with interesting findings that women are flexible and have forsaken their previous climate damaging activities and joined the tourism industry despite their financial challenges. The study equally found that women noticed the negative effects on the climate change through seaweed growth; but they do not have arenas for discussion. Additionally, they noted weak institutional support and minimal media coverage.

A report by the University of Dar es Salaam (2022) found that climate change stories in Zanzibar's media were sparse, with fewer than 10 stories in 2021 covering the blue economy, despite significant government focus on the issue. The report also noted that women were rarely represented as sources in climate change stories. Only 8% of radio sources were women. This finding aligns with the TAMWA, ZNZ report (2022), which found that only 22% of women were represented across six major media outlets: Zanzibar Leo Newspaper, The Citizen, Zanzibar Broadcasting Corporation Television, Zanzibar Broadcasting Corporation, Assalam FM, and Zanzibar Cable Television.

Elsewhere coverage of climate change within the media sector increases albeit with limited impact. Schafer (2015) found a major shift of media coverage on climate change from placing its stories only on the special scientific page to rather move into other sections, most notably to politics and the economy writing in among others; treaties on carbon emissions, the costs of moving toward low-carbon societies for national economies, or the humanitarian

and security implications. However, he found weak media effects on behavioral change and action worldwide called for strategic shift from writing more on awareness and individual effort to agenda setting on the audience's issues.

Climate Basics (2022) in its study named Capacity Challenges, Gaps and Needs Assessment of Georgian Media for Improved Climate and Environmental Reporting, saw also a limited coverage of journalists in the climate change topic not alone in women point of view. The study cited a lack of interest for journalists to write about climate change topics compounded by lack of training, resources, specialized journalists, materials, updated information, support from the government and disconnection from the environmental organizations. The study suggested an action plan to rectify the situation including constantly developing story ideas between journalists and editors utilizing the environmental organizations extant in the country.

A study conducted by Kapinga, Sife, Silayo & Siyao ( 2020 ) on the Role of Community Broadcast Media in the Dissemination of Climate Change Information among Small-holder Farmers in Isimani Division, Iringa Rural District, Tanzania found that 65.8% of all those who watched television could follow broadcast programmes on adaptation and mitigation to climate change citing topics such as importance of the use of early maturing seeds, crop rotation, the use of drought-tolerant seeds, afforestation, the use of organic fertilizers, intercropping and contour farming. The study identified several barriers hindering access to and utilization of broadcast media for climate change adaptation and mitigation in Isimani, Rural Iringa District. These include inadequate power supply, unreliable network coverage, low income, limited environmental programming and language difficulties. To address these challenges, the study recommends that the government reduce tariffs on internet services and broadcast equipment and that media owners invest more in enhancing community awareness of climate change in Isimani, Rural Iringa District. The study, however, did not mention the frequency of the stories aired nor did it incorporate perspectives from actors including journalists themselves. It also lied in the margin of awareness raising and information dissemination rather than the broader issue of advocacy and reforms.

#### **4.1 Theoretical Framework**

The Empowerment Framework forms the foundation of this research problem. It allows the researcher to assess how media stories have empowered women to raise their voices in climate change adaptation and lead to the changes envisioned. Molyneux (1985, p.238) emphasizes the importance of addressing strategic needs empowering women to take control of their own needs by providing them with the space and flexibility to make decisions on issues that affect them and society at large.

Thus, the empowerment theory identifies three forms of power: "power to," "power within," and "power with" (Longwe, 1995; Rowland, 1997; Kabeer, 2004; Mosedale, 2005). "Power to" refers to the ability to act, even in opposition to others. "Power within" is the personal sense of agency—the belief that one has the capacity to act. "Power with" signifies collective action, recognizing that greater achievements are possible when a group acts together rather than individuals acting alone. It represents the internal forces that drive individuals into action, inspire them, and propel them to demand transformation.

This concept aligns with the principles of journalism, rather than contradicting them. In fact, it reinforces contemporary views on journalism, where, unlike in the past when journalists were primarily tasked with educating, entertaining, and criticizing, they are now also expected to advocate for marginalized groups, such as women and girls. Gyldensted, C. (2015, p.21), in support of Constructive Journalism, argues that it is a contextual genre

because it is "a more comprehensive form of journalism" that accurately reflects the world by covering not just stories of conflict but also stories of progress. Fisher (2016, p.722) further emphasizes that advocacy in journalism is inevitable. Even unintentionally, a reporter's inclusion of a comment or perspective from a source can introduce advocacy into a story. She argues that the more passionately sources advocate, the stronger the story becomes. Fisher advocates for the rise of "civic" advocacy journalism, in which groups use the media to mobilize public opinion and drive social change.

It is from this perspective that this study has been conducted to examine the extent of women's transformation in Zanzibar through media stories, using media to foster empowerment and facilitate change.

## **4.2 International, Regional, and National Protocols and Strategies**

Zanzibar as part of Tanzania forms part of the global commitment to accelerated efforts in climate change mitigation and adaptation. This include the Paris Agreement, adopted in 2015 under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) whose long-term goals include limiting global warming below 2°C and pursuing efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5°C. Additionally, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 13, underscore the importance of taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts, integrating climate measures into -national policies, strategies, and planning.

Regionally, the African Union's Agenda 2063 and its associated policies emphasize the importance of climate resilience and sustainable development. There is also the African Climate Change Strategy aiming to enhance climate resilience through collaborative efforts, capacity building, and technology transfer among African nations. It tends to increase the share of renewable energy in the energy mix to at least 50% by 2063 (African Union, 2013.p1).

## **4.3 National Policies and Strategies**

At the Tanzanian level, the country has recently adopted the National Clean Cooking Strategy which spans 10 years. The strategy aims to ensure that 80% of Tanzanians use clean cooking solutions by 2034. The current percentage of 6.9% is way below the global average of 71%. The strategy indicates that 82% of the primary energy used in the country comes from biomass (United Republic of Tanzania 2024 p. 7).

At the Zanzibar level, Zanzibar has developed specific climate change policies and plans that align with both international and regional frameworks. This includes Vision 2050 which underscores the island's commitment to addressing climate change. This long-term strategic framework envisions a resilient and sustainable Zanzibar, where climate change mitigation and adaptation are integrated into all sectors of development. It outlines specific approaches to limit greenhouse gas emissions to 1.5°C, enhancing adaptive capacities, and promoting sustainable practices across various sectors, including agriculture, fisheries, tourism, and infrastructure. It also highlights the need for robust institutional frameworks, community engagement, and the empowerment of vulnerable groups, particularly women and youth, in climate action.

Equally, the Zanzibar National Forest Resources Management Plan (2008-2020) emphasizes the need for inclusive governance frameworks that recognize women's contributions to environmental sustainability. Policies promoting women's engagement in decision-making processes are crucial for achieving effective climate adaptation outcomes (The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar, 2008 p 35).

## 5. Methodology

The methodology employed in this study aims to provide a holistic understanding of media contribution on women adaption in the climate change saga. The information collected is both quantitative and qualitative thus applying triangulation. The quantitative tool looked at the media stories written about the topic and the qualitative side validated and dovetailed the inferences by interacting with the participants relevant in the field through interviews and Focus Group Discussion (FGD). The credibility of interpretive research can be improved by providing evidence of the researcher's extended engagement in the field, by demonstrating data triangulation across subjects or data collection techniques (Bhattacharjee (2012. p110)). The participation of government entities, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), media representatives, and women within the communities not only confirmed the conclusions but also took part in actively discerning pathways for the remedial actions.

The qualitative component of this methodology delved into the lived experiences, perspectives, and narratives of 20 key stakeholders, including media professionals, women leaders, and community members.

Table 1. Stakeholders representation in the sample.

TYPE	LOCATION		GENDER			
	Unguja	Pemba	Male		Female	
			Un g	Pba	U ng	Pba
Government	4	2	2	1	2	1
CSOs	2	2	-	2	2	-
Community	4	3	-	-	4	3
Journalists	-	3	-	2	-	1
Sub total	10	10	2	5	8	5
OVERALL TOTAL	20					

FGD included 19 journalists who have covered and not covered climate changed adaptation stories.

The quantitative part employed a review of stories from 13 media stations from both mainstream and social media. These were four widely read local newspapers: Zanzibar Leo, The Guardian, Nipashe, and Daily News. two prominent TV; Zanzibar Broadcasting Cooperation (ZBC) and Zanzibar Cable Television), two radio channels two social media platforms namely Facebook and X (Twitter). In addition, three (3) online platforms were selected; Pemba Post Blog, Zan Light Blog and Pemba Today to see the level of coverage on the topic. The review entailed stories published or aired from January to May, 2024.

## 6. Data Analysis

Both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques were employed in the study. The qualitative analysis involved thematic and content analysis of various media sources to identify relevant themes and patterns. Additionally, content analysis of media materials was used to achieve immersion and obtain a sense of the whole (Tesch, 1990 p 18). The quantitative data analysis involved a descriptive analysis of survey data supported by the SPSS program. The intervention of the media was measured against eight underlined dependent variables. They included voice of women and girls in the stories, women sources, advocacy, accountability of actors. data driven stories, individual and collective actions and potential impact of the stories.



## 7. Findings

This chapter presents a detailed analysis of the adaptation of climate change versus media influence and the gaps that exist. From the sample taken, the analysis gathered a total of 1,161 programs and 2,600 stories from TV and radio, 608 newspaper articles and 102 social media stories.

### 7.1 Voice of Women/ Girl in the Media Stories

Out of the 4,547 media contents reviewed as published within the period of study, only 50 pieces, or a mere 1.1%, included the perspectives of women and girls as the info graph 1 below breakdowns.

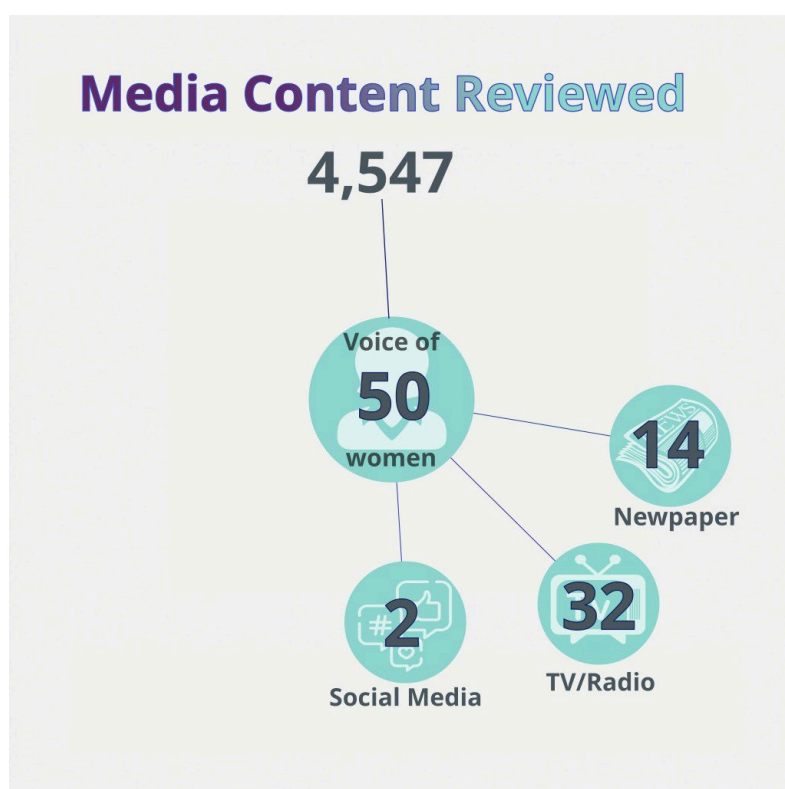


Figure 2. Info graph no. 1: Media stories reviewed

These findings critically underscore the limited coverage of women and girls' issues in media narratives related to climate change adaptation. Only when issues are spoken with pervasiveness changes can be guaranteed. In his book *Mass Communication Theory* (McQuails, 2001 p 37) maintains that values, beliefs and attitudes - one tries to change may be deeply entrenched because many values, beliefs and attitudes are interconnected. It does not need a single message to change the status quo but rather repeated efforts.

### 7.2 Women/ Girls as Sources in the Stories

Of the 199 sources in the climate change adaptation; women were 69 equal to 34% while men were 130 equal to 66%. This significant disparity highlights the pervasive marginalization of women's voices and perspectives in media narratives concerning climate adaptation. The finding corresponds with the study by TAMWA, ZNZ which look at the women sources in the leadership sphere. The same with TAMWA ZNZ findings, this study also saw majority of



these sources were women in the position of power. These were President of the United Republic of Tanzania; H.E Samia Suluhu, Member of the Central Committee of the Revolutionary Party (NEC); Ms Habiba Ali Mohamed, the Minister of State in the Office of the First Vice President; Hon Harusi Said Suleiman, Minister of Land and Housing Development; Ms Rahma Kassim Ali and Deputy Minister of Land and Housing Development Hon Salha Mohammed Mwinjuma.

Other women sources were regularly selected from regular programs such as “SANUKA locally means wake up” aired by ZBC radio which is more diverse in terms of topics and actors run under the mentorship of British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Media action. Interviews with the KII revealed stunning contribution of women in climate change adaptation, forming community patrol groups to combat pollution and illegal logging in over 60 communities. Women were also cited as key community organizers & mobilizers and adaptor of the mixed farming, “Women were the key figures to adapt the mixed farming when introduced to the topic as a counter climate change measure unlike their male counterparts who expressed overt resistance on the idea”, said Ali Said Operation Manager of Community Forest Pemba. The women respondents from Charawe said ‘We conduct ad hock security patrol at mangrove forest, and we have already proved successful arresting several men who cut down the mangrove trees for charcoal’. Stories of this nature unfortunately have not surfaced in the media review. Journalists on their side journalists blamed women in particular for being afraid to comment on the stories and traditional perceptions that women are not entitled and less equipped to talk about hard subjects such as climate change adaptation. Furthermore, they have mentioned lack of resources to cover stories at rural communities. “We are not getting the required support neither from our bosses nor from the experts”, they said. Being more specific, they said that going to the communities requires fuel, vehicle and networks and journalists need to be handheld to pursue the stories. Another barrier mentioned by journalists was lack of prioritization of the matter within the media houses. This scanty reporting of women climate change adaptation diminishes their visibility and contributions on the matter.

### **7.3 Advocacy Actions of Women & Girls in the Stories**

The analysis reveals a glaring deficiency in advocating for women and girl’s rights within the media stories in climate change adaptation. Out of 4,548 reviewed stories, articles, and programs, only eight (8) pieces (0.17%) focused on advocacy. Specifically, newspapers accounted for 4 instances, social media and radio contributed two each. As stated earlier on, programs such as those supported by actors played a significant role in empowering the population especially women. This is despite the reality that number of women suffered climate change disasters with some lost their properties and agricultural produces. Almost my whole house was swept over by the heavy rains last year and no media attention given to me” said Ms Amina Nassor from Kiuyu Micheweni, Pemba. Around 123 areas of Pemba Island alone have been affected by the climate change especially sea level rise and as stated above women are more affected (Ibid Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar;2021 p. 16).

They have more reasons to fight for the cause. Mills Wright (1959 p.12) on Sociological Imagination long enough articulated the work of the media as to take personal problems and translate them into social issues. He stated that a primary strategy of media advocacy is to work with individuals and groups to claim power of the media to change the context or environment in which the problem occurs. Media advocacy attempts to reframe and shape public discussion to increase support for the marginalized groups or injured people. Molyneux, Maxine. (1985 p 234), states that the relationship between what we have called strategic gender interests and women’s recognition of them and the desire to realise them,

cannot be assumed without a clear capacity-building strategy. Media houses therefore need to create a strong capacity-building and trust strategy to unleash women's potential.

Below is the advocacy story by ZBC from SANUKA

*Sample story*

*February 18, 2024, SANUKA program, ZBC radio run a public debate on climate change.*

*The SANUKA radio program of March 21, 2024, had a discussion of experts and societies focused on the heavy rains caused by climate change.*

*The SANUKA radio program of May 18, 2024, touched on climate change and prompted a broad debate.*

#### **7.4 Accountability of Actors**

This variable looks at how far journalists have held actors accountable on commission or omission regarding climate change adaptation on women's point of view. As known Zanzibar and Tanzania in general are inclined by international, regional and national standard to accelerated actions on climate change adaptation. The analysis reveals a significant deficiency in the accountability of actors within the reviewed stories, articles, and programs. Out of the entire body of 4,548 reviewed content, a mere 0.2%, represented by a single instance on social media, addressed the accountability of actors.

Media was expected to track implementation of certain plans, budget, strategies, laws and bylaws to share how far they have reached against their own national or regional goals and participation of the people especially women in decision making. Without explicit recognition of the responsibilities of various stakeholders such as government officials, NGOs, and community leaders the systemic obstacles to women's participation remain unchallenged.

However, the message is as important as the messenger. Unfortunately, journalists admitted that they had limited knowledge about climate change strategies and issues that unfolded like agroforestry and mangrove conservation let alone awareness of the community activities. Women on the other hand are more knowledgeable and aware. "The current issue is severe because the amount being planted is much less than what is being cut down," the woman respondent from the community aid'

#### **7.5 Data Driven Stories**

Only stories with data can hold water and serve as decisive tool for informed decision and display the level of advocacy from the journalist's side. Let's say, the stories have to say how many promises made by the country at the regional or international level have been fulfilled and how many have been left behind. How many women have access to clean energy and why the gap and how far or behind they are in meeting the national and the regional goal on issues such as the temperature management, carbon emission and fund access. The finding reveals a significant shortfall in the presentation of statistical data within newspapers, radio, and TV programs. Overall, the analysis indicates that there is a profound lack of data-driven storytelling. Out of 4,547 reviewed stories, articles, and programs, only 9 (0.9%) incorporate any form of data, underscoring an alarming deficiency in data utilization across various media platforms.

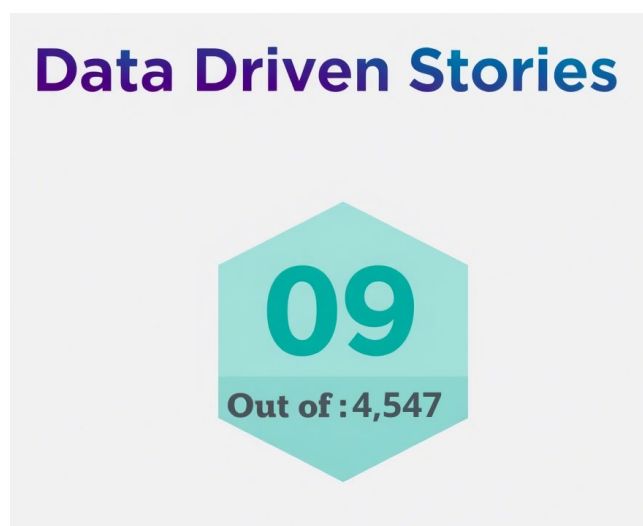


Figure 3. Infograph no 2: Data driven stories covered by journalists.

Specifically, newspapers and TV and radio broadcasts each feature only 4 data-driven stories, while social media includes just 1. Furthermore, the critical analysis highlights that even the stories containing data fell short of interpretation on the broader perspective. These stories often present raw data without elucidating its significance or implications, failing to leverage data to enhance understanding or drive meaningful narratives. This oversight points to a critical gap in media reporting, where the potential of data to provide depth and credibility to stories about women's roles and leadership in climate adaptation remains largely untapped.

### 7.6 Potential Impact Caused by the Stories

For a story to warrant impact it needs to be focused and researched with both quantitative and qualitative data. The impact of actions related to women's equality and leadership in nature-based climate adaptation in Zanzibar is rarely highlighted in media coverage. Only four stories; three programs aired by ZBC under SANUKA and 1 opinion from Zanzibar Leo newspaper as mentioned above had the potential of producing results.

#### *English translation*

*Title of the story: Let's Unite to Prevent the Effects of Climate Change; Zanzibar Today, Friday, January 19th, 2024*

*Zanzibar, as a country, should not sit back and wait for more evidence of the effects of climate change. Instead, the main focus should be on ensuring the community is mobilized to address this situation.*

*We should encourage our citizens to plant trees, which not only help absorb greenhouse gases but also serve as a source of rain.*

Other stories were presented in parrot style, reporting without analysis. These stories limit the audience's understanding of the real-world effects of climate adaptation initiatives.

## **7.7 Individual and Collective Actions**

Individual actions refer to actions taken by an individual woman alone. This is what Kabeer (2004:31), calls agency where a woman takes any action towards improving her socio-political status which includes learning how to read and write. Individual actions within media narratives play a crucial role motivating individual woman herself but also inspiring others to follow suit. It also helps in changing narrative about women passive role in certain subjects considered hard and high such as climate change adaptation. However, analysis spotted isolated actions reported by the media. Out of 4,547 reviewed stories, articles, and programs, only 4 (0.08%) highlight individual contributions to the cause. Specifically, two (2) instances are found in a newspaper article, and the other in a social media post. The analysis on another hand did not find even a single case of collective actions taken despite women group interventions in the forest management, conservation, awareness and patrolling.

Community Forest Pemba alone have a data base of 620 women champions always on their toes taking climate change actions. Another CSO named Mwambao had 2,577 people addressing climate change; 1788 women equal to 69.3 and 789 men equal to 30.6. “Women have dedicated their time in creating awareness, patrolling the community and seashores, planting and nursing trees especially mangroves and engaging with the authorities about climate change adaptation gaps and efforts”, said Omar Mtarika; Director of Climate Change Adaptation in Pemba. Mwambao report (2023 p 6) maintained that women have been attending marine management meetings, reporting illegal fishing, complying with the marine management rules, seeing environmentally friendly businesses, planting mangrove, participating in marine patrol, cleaning beaches and raising awareness of marine management. Using Kabeer framework (2004) then women have demonstrated less power in addressing climate change issues collectively while the reality is the opposite. If the press does not cover your demonstration to highlight the issue at hand, it might as well not have taken place as far as the broader community (and probably the person with the power to make the change you want) is concerned (Wallack L, 1994 p 426).

## **8. Conclusion**

The study reveals that media stories on women's climate change adaptation are few and far apart reflecting broader systemic challenge of women less representation in the public discourses. This hinders not only women meaningful participation but also effective implementation of the national and regional policies on both mitigation and adaptation measures.

As noted in the findings, women's engagement in climate change adaptation was indispensable due to their precarious level yet dedicated in the fight. Their omission in the media stories limited the overall discussion of the topic in the public eye that could warrant more actions from the diverse actors. Equally to note is the fact that for years' women have been trained to shun away from the public discourses. This requires special efforts by the media to change their mindsets and accord women the space they deserve.

Overall climate change and global warming are a serious challenge that eludes the world. Its effects are more devastating in countries such as Zanzibar which are small islands and economically volatile. Efforts to adapt to climate change need to be explicit and enforced by every actor. Media as the voice of the people must be on its toe framing agenda, identifying milestones, challenges and possible resorts. As seen in the analysis several issues are at stake from rising temperature, deforestation, increased water intrusion, lack of coordinated efforts

and visible support to victims in climate adaptation. From 2012, where the major assessment was undertaken on the impact of climate change in Zanzibar followed by 2018 which anchored mainly on the sea water intrusion it is evident that the danger is real, and media could have pushed for adaptation programs.

It is unfortunate that 13 years down the road, media is under informed and remained with only rudimentary knowledge about the aftermath of climate change. Most of the stories written were more on event reporting and awareness raising denying the public the benefit of analysis and interpretation of the changes encountered across the time and sectors. With the precarious situation Zanzibar is embedded in, media was expected to educate the public about climate justice in finances, policies, carbon market, accountability, participation of the people, international & national budget and carbon compliance. Limited capacity of journalists to understand issues of climate change has precluded the public from fair analysis and timely responses. This is also the explanation of limited coverage and activism on the area from the media side and the public in general particularly women.

This, however, is not an endless complain, women in the communities have demonstrated increased ability to understand the climate change hazards and actions forthwith. Unfortunately, because of their marginal positions their actions have not been much recognized and found limited channels to voice their concerns. This disjuncture between women and media showcases challenge but also an opportunity. Media should rise beyond its current effort covering women adaptation actions and linking them with the national, regional and international programs and discourses. This transformation is essential for fostering climate change actions on timely fashion.

Media houses ought to allocate financial and time resources to cover women stories and build trust to the women that they are their partner in development. This will ensure two ways of communication and rigorous reporting of the topic.

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