

**WHO  
MAKES THE  
NEWS?**



**INDIA**

**Global Media Monitoring  
Project 2010  
National Report**



## Acknowledgements



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GMMP 2010 is co-ordinated by the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC), an international NGO which promotes communication for social change, in collaboration with data analyst, Media Monitoring Africa (MMA), South Africa.

The data for GMMP 2010 was collected through the collective voluntary effort of hundreds of organizations including gender and media activists, grassroots communication groups, academics and students of communication, media professionals, journalists associations, alternative media networks and church groups.



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### Global Context

- 10 November 2009 was an ordinary day at work for newsroom staff around the world. It was however a special day for groups in over 100 countries who gathered to monitor their news media. After months of planning, preparations and training, they brought the Fourth Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) to life.
- The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) is the world's longest-running and most extensive research on gender in the news media. It began in 1995 when volunteers in 71 countries around the world monitored women's presence in their national radio, television and print news. The research revealed that only 17% of news subjects – the people who are interviewed or whom the news is about – were women. It found that gender parity was 'a distant prospect in any region of the world. News [was] more often being presented by women but it [was] still rarely about women.<sup>1</sup>
- Seventy countries participated in the Second GMMP in 2000. This and all subsequent GMMPs were coordinated by the World Association for Christian Communication (WACC). The research found a relatively static picture: only 18% of news subject were women, a statistically insignificant change over the 5-year period.<sup>2</sup>
- The Third GMMP in 2005 attracted the participation of 76 countries. Some progress in women's presence in the news was evident. 21% of news subjects were female. This 3% increase in the preceding five years was statistically significant. However, the overwhelming finding was women's continued near invisibility in the news. Very little news – just under 10% of all stories – focussed specifically on women. Women were rarely central in stories that comprised the bulk of the news agenda. Women were outnumbered by men as newsmakers in every major news topic. Expert opinion was overwhelmingly male with women comprising only 17% of experts who appeared in news stories. As newsmakers, women were under-represented in professional categories. The third GMMP found that the sex of the journalist made a difference in whether or not women made the news: there were more female news subjects in stories reported by female journalists (25%) than in stories reported by male journalists (20%).
- The First GMMP, and as will be seen, the Fourth GMMP reveal that the world reported in the news is mostly male. Overall, news stories were twice as likely to reinforce gender stereotypes rather than challenging them. News stories on gender (in)equality were almost non-existent.
- The news media remain the major and most influential sources of information, ideas and opinion for most people around the world. They constitute a key element of the public and private space in which people, nations and societies live. They are in a position to further public understanding of the political, economic, social and cultural environment and to gauge the public mood. A society that does not fully know itself cannot respond to the aspirations of all its members. So who and what appears in the news and how people and events are portrayed does matter. Who is left out and what is not covered are equally important. The cultural underpinnings of gender inequality and discrimination against women are often reinforced through the media across the world.

<sup>1</sup> Global Media Monitoring Project, *Women's participation in the news*. National Watch on Images of Women in the Media (MediaWatch) Inc. 1995

<sup>2</sup> Spears, George and Kasia Seydegart, Erin Research. with additional analysis by Margaret Gallagher. *Who makes the news? Global Media Monitoring Project*. 2000

## National context

- The mass media today are omnipresent and omnipotent, if not omniscient. They are everywhere – in the form of television, radio, newspapers, magazines and the Internet. No longer restricted to traditional means of delivery they are now accessible anywhere, at any time, through portable computers and even cellular phones. They are so much a part of modern life that their presence and influence are not always noticeable.
- The media now constitute a central and powerful force in societies across the world, and certainly in India. They are increasingly playing the roles once played by family, community, religion and formal education: not only disseminating information and knowledge, but also shaping values and norms, moulding attitudes and behaviour, and influencing the very process of living. As the late American academic George Gerbner pointed out time and again, the stories the media tell – now virtually around the clock and through multiple channels of communication – “weave the seamless web of the cultural environment that cultivates most of what we think, what we do, and how we conduct our affairs.”<sup>3</sup>
- India is one of the few places in the world where the news media sector, including the press, has been thriving despite worldwide trends in the opposite direction. For example, according to the Registrar of Newspapers for India (RNI), the growth rate of registered publications was 6.7% in 2007-08 (the latest period for which official data is currently available).<sup>4</sup>
- The print media in India have traditionally been marked by diversity and plurality – in terms of language, genre, location, ownership and political perspectives. In contrast, the broadcast sector (both TV and radio) was monopolised by the two state/public broadcasters, All India Radio/Akashvani and Doordarshan, until the early 1990s. The proliferation of private sector broadcasters over the past decade has resulted in the current availability of dozens of 24-hour TV news channels in multiple languages, transmitted through satellite-cable networks or, more recently, direct-to-home services.
- Although there has been a boom in privately owned FM radio stations, too, especially in urban centres, they are at present not allowed to broadcast news and current affairs. Until recently, community radio was a distant dream, kept alive by a few experimental projects mostly run by socially and economically disadvantaged rural women. Finally, after years of lobbying and advocacy, educational institutions were officially allowed to start campus radio stations in 2002. Then, in December 2006, other non-profit organisations were permitted to set up non-commercial community radio stations in rural and urban areas. However the growing number of such radio services (many run by women) still have to contend with several restrictions, including the prohibition of news broadcasts. Indigenous radio news is, therefore, still confined to All India Radio.
- Increased competition in the media sector, combined with the rise of commercialism and consumerism in the wake of the economic “liberalisation” or “reform” policies introduced from the late 1980s and early 1990s onwards, are widely perceived to have led to the “dumbing down,” “trivialisation” or “broadloidisation”<sup>5</sup> of significant sections of the news media, both print and broadcast. As a result, even serious news is often presented as entertainment.
- This trend cannot but have implications for the representation of women in the news. There is a paucity of regular, systematic monitoring of the news media in India. However, the few formal studies on the representation of women and coverage of gender issues in the Indian news media over the past couple of decades suggest that progress, if any, has been slow and unsteady. Despite some positive developments, there seems to be little doubt that the evident increase in the quantum of coverage has been accompanied by an upsurge in trivialisation, and that there has been little change in the media’s fixation with event over process.
- A small survey of newspapers conducted in 2005<sup>6</sup> revealed that gender awareness had not yet been integrated into “mainstream,” “hard news” media coverage. It also confirmed the

3 Gerbner, G. (1999). Foreword by George Gerbner: What do we know? In J. Shanahan and M. Morgan (Eds.), *Television and its viewers: Cultivation theory and research*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, and elsewhere.

4 Website of the Registrar of Newspapers for India: <http://eni.nic.in>

5 Literally: the supplanting of broadsheet content with tabloid content; all three terms refer to the news media’s growing tendency to focus on entertainment, celebrities, privileged lifestyles, gossip, trivia, etc.

6 For the new introduction to “Whose News? The Media and Women’s Issues,” Ammu Joseph and Kalpana Sharma (eds.), Sage Publications, India, 2006.

overwhelming influence of commercialism, the presence of lifestyle/celebrity journalism and the blending of news with entertainment in much of the Indian media. The following were among the perceptible trends that emerged from the survey findings:

- > The concept of news as entertainment has caught on even in broadsheet daily newspapers, some more than others
  - > The preoccupation with the lives and times, interests and concerns of the bold and the beautiful, the rich and the famous, the pampered and the powerful is ever more prevalent and pronounced
  - > The traditional orientation towards events rather than processes persists
  - > Values and norms of professional journalism are increasingly being jettisoned
  - > The artificial and dubious classification of news into “hard” and “soft” carries on, with women under-represented in the former – considered more “prestigious” – especially as sources of information and opinion
  - > Women, and gender concerns, have yet to be integrated into the broad news agenda
  - > “Women’s issues” are still by and large seen as narrow, niche issues and covered as such; some – especially dramatic or lurid cases of violence or discrimination – continue to receive more coverage than other equally important issues
  - > Superficiality, sensationalism and/or insensitivity frequently mark such coverage
  - > Serious coverage of significant gender-related events/issues, when it occurs, is often lost in the carpet coverage accorded to trivial pursuits
  - > Blatant sexism and crude stereotyping are less evident than they were earlier but subtler – possibly more pernicious and effective – forms persevere
  - > Special pages for coverage of gender (and/or development) have disappeared, although a few columns written from a feminist/gender perspective continue
  - > Women are viewed, presented and addressed more as consumers than as citizens
  - > The focus is primarily on individual women – whether victims or heroines – rather than on women as a collective and/or as female members of diverse communities with some shared experiences and concerns, needs and opinions.
  - > Women categorised as “achievers” and/or “celebrities,” their perspectives, and events or issues concerning them receive disproportionate media attention
  - > “Ordinary” women, and their experiences and opinions, are either missing or represented almost exclusively by urban, middle class women
  - > Socially, economically, geographically and otherwise disadvantaged women, and their experiences and opinions, are virtually absent<sup>7</sup>
- Despite such informed observations, there is a general perception among the public, as well as many within the media profession, that both women and what are commonly known as women’s issues are now more than adequately covered by the media.
  - It is important to note that women are no longer missing from the Indian media, whether as media professionals or as subjects or even sources of news. If “symbolic annihilation”<sup>8</sup> resulting in the absence of women from the news pages was the problem (worldwide and in India) a few decades ago, the media now tend to be replete with images of and references to women. The question today is not so much “Where are the women?” but “Who are the women?” Also, “When and where do they appear?” and “What are they shown saying and doing?” In other words, “How are they represented?”
  - These are some of the questions that the Global Media Monitoring Project seeks to address. The data yielded by the Project can lay the foundation for an ongoing, information-based assessment of gender in the news media in India.

7 For more details see “Whose News? The Media and Women’s Issues,” Ammu Joseph and Kalpana Sharma (eds.), Sage Publications, India, 2006.

8 “Symbolic annihilation is used to highlight the erasure of peoples in popular communication. George Gerbner coined the term to describe the “absence” (1972, 44; Gerbner & Gross 1976; Gerbner, George), “condemnation,” or “trivialisation” (Tuchman 1978, 17) of a particular group in the media. Generally applied to women and racial and sexual minorities, symbolic annihilation points to the ways in which poor media treatment can contribute to social disempowerment and in which symbolic absence in the media can erase groups and individuals from public consciousness.” [Quotation sourced from a paper on “Symbolic Annihilation” by Robin R. Means Coleman and Emily Chivers Yochim in the International Encyclopaedia of Communication 2008, Blackwell Publishing Inc.]

- The Network of Women in Media, India (NWMI) is a professional association linking women journalists and other women working in or on the media across the country. Members of the informal, autonomous organisation, which functions as a collective, support responsive, responsible, gender-sensitive journalism and are committed to democracy and gender justice within the media and society.
- We believe that journalism sets the context for national debates on important current events and thereby affects public perceptions of issues across the socio-economic and political continuum – including, but not only, what are widely seen as “women’s issues.” By determining who has a voice in these debates and who is silenced, which issues are discussed and how they are framed, the media have the power to maintain the status quo or challenge the dominant order.
- The NWMI decided to join the international effort to generate information about gender in the news media through the GMMP because of our common concerns about media representations of women and issues of particular concern to women. The network was too young to take on coordination of the GMMP in 2005 but accepted the challenge this time around.
- This country report on the findings of GMMP 2010 in India (with some references to comparable results across Asia) should be read along with the global Who Makes the News report which, besides presenting the worldwide picture, includes detailed discussions on the methodology, the findings, and the significance of the various data sets that have emerged from the study.



## Highlights

- The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) is the world's longest-running and most extensive research on gender in the news media. India was among the 100 plus countries across the world where groups of volunteers participated in the Fourth Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP), monitoring a cross-section of news media on a single, pre-determined day: 10 November 2009.
- The Network of Women in Media, India (NWMI), a professional association linking women journalists and other women working in or on the media across the country, coordinated the GMMP 2010 process in India.
- This report on the findings of GMMP 2010 in India must be read along with the global report titled, *Who Makes the News?*,<sup>9</sup> which, besides presenting the worldwide picture, includes detailed discussions on the methodology, the findings, and the significance of the various data sets emerging from the study.
- The India country report is based on data gathered from a sample of 20 dailies, 11 TV news bulletins, and 5 radio bulletins which together represent 9 languages. India was not among the countries selected for monitoring of online media (initiated on a pilot basis in this round of the GMMP). Data culled from approximately 862 news stories that appeared in the Indian print and broadcast media on the monitoring day were included in the analysis. The findings provide a snapshot of the representation and portrayal of women and men in the Indian news media.
- The monitoring was conducted by 22 volunteers registered as participants in the day-long exercise on 10 November 2009. The monitors represented various walks of life and were located in different parts of the country.
- In accordance with the GMMP methodology, only the main/general news pages within daily newspapers and regular/general news bulletins in the broadcast media were covered by the survey. Business and sports pages/sections and programmes were not; neither were pages/programmes devoted to opinion/comment.
- While stories on politics and government dominated news coverage across mediums (accounting for approximately a third of all reports), stories on crime and violence were not far behind (accounting for a third of all reports on TV and a quarter in print). In contrast, stories related to the economy were negligible (less than 10 per cent on TV and just over 10 per cent in print).
- Women constituted less than a quarter (22 per cent) of the people heard or read about in the news (i.e., as news subjects) across all topic categories. The corresponding global figure for news subjects – people who are interviewed or whom the news is about – was 24 per cent. Across Asia the corresponding figure was 20 per cent.
- Most news stories featured men as the main subject (78 per cent) – i.e., more than three quarters of the stories analysed revolved around men. An overwhelming proportion of experts/commentators (82 per cent) and spokespersons (87 per cent) featured in the news was male. Women featured in the news primarily as ‘persons on the street’ or as representatives of ‘popular opinion’ (54 per cent).
- Only 22 per cent of the news subjects who were also sources of information (news sources) were women; 78 per cent of the news sources were men.
- Among news subjects, men outnumbered women in almost all occupational categories represented in the news. The only categories with a larger proportion of women than men were: homemaker-parent, celebrity-artist-actor-writer-singer, and activist-civil society worker.
- Nearly a third (30 per cent) of the female news subjects in the Indian news media was identified by their family status while only 5 per cent of male news subjects were similarly identified.
- Only 12% of the news stories had women as the central focus (i.e., focussed specifically on one or more women). That is marginally less than the global figure (13%).
- Only 5 per cent of the news stories highlighted gender equality or inequality, again marginally less than the global figure (6 per cent).



<sup>9</sup> The report can be accessed on the GMMP website, [www.whomakesthenews.org](http://www.whomakesthenews.org)

- Nearly two thirds (63 per cent) of the news stories from the Indian media that were analysed reinforced gender stereotypes while only 9 per cent challenged them. In contrast, globally less than half (46 per cent) of the news stories reinforced stereotypes.
- Men vastly outnumbered women among reporters across all media and all news topics. Only in a couple of topic categories (such as crime and violence, and celebrity, arts, media and sports) was the difference less stark.
- Less than half the presenters and announcers on Indian radio and television were women.
- About a third (34 per cent) of the news stories in the print media and less than half (43 per cent) of the stories on TV were reported by women. None of the journalists reporting news on radio on monitoring day were women.

## A DAY IN THE NEWS IN INDIA

**10 November 2009**

On monitoring day (10 November 2009) the front pages of most national newspapers across India were dominated by an unseemly spectacle in the Legislative Assembly of Maharashtra, where four members of the legislature assaulted another one for taking his oath in Hindi (the national language) rather than Marathi (the official language of the state). Several newspapers also carried news of the chaos in the High Court of Karnataka, where lawyers were agitating against the Chief Justice who had been accused of corruption (in the form of acquisition of land through unfair means).



The ongoing troubles of the Government of Karnataka, with fissures in the ruling political party coming out into the open in the wake of devastating floods in the state's northern districts some weeks earlier, also claimed space on many front pages. The release of "The India Gender Gap Review 2009" produced by the World Economic Summit found a little space on some front pages. Television and radio news was over-run in several places by the results of local by-elections.

In view of the dominant news mix on monitoring day, there were hardly any stories that merited qualitative gender analysis. So this report is based on quantitative analysis of information gathered through the prescribed GMMP questionnaire.

## THE CONTEXT

### Country background:

The Indian print media currently include over 69,323 registered newspapers and periodicals, according to the latest figures on the website of the Registrar of Newspapers for India (updated up to 31 March 2008).<sup>10</sup> The total circulation of newspapers in 2007-08 was over 200 million copies (207,108,115). Indian publications appear in as many as 101 languages and dialects.

There are over 500 registered television channels in India (503, according to the January-March 2010 quarterly report of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India).<sup>11</sup> At least 100 more are reportedly awaiting permission to uplink or downlink.

As mentioned earlier, radio news is still restricted to the state/public broadcaster, All India Radio, since the government does not permit other radio service providers – private or community-based – to broadcast news and current affairs. The growing private FM radio sector is at present almost exclusively devoted to entertainment (largely popular music) and community radio is still in the process of establishing itself in the media environment.

A significant feature of the mass communication scenario in India over the past couple of decades is the resurgence of the Indian language media, both print and audio-visual. National readership surveys confirm the renaissance in Indian language newspapers, believed to be spurred largely by rising literacy rates.

There is some evidence that the accelerated media growth of the past decade may have slowed down in the last couple of years, possibly as a side-effect of the global economic downturn. Readership of most newspapers and magazines stayed the same or registered some decline in the six months prior to the release of Round 1 of the Indian Readership Survey (IRS) 2009 in May last year.<sup>12</sup>

Internet usage in India is relatively low but steadily growing. According to the latest figures posted by Internet World Stats, in June 2009 India had 81,000,000 Internet users and 5,280,000 broadband Internet connections.<sup>13</sup> Although the penetration remained low at 6.9%, the user growth rate over the past decade (2000-2010) is pegged fairly high at 1,520%. However, India was not among the 28 countries selected (on the basis of per capita access to the Internet) to monitor online news sources on a pilot basis for this latest round of the GMMP.

### Media monitored:

The number of each type of medium to be monitored for the global report of the GMMP was based on media density bands developed by the research team. India was placed in Media Band 5 (highest density) for TV and Radio and in Media Band 5 (second highest density) for newspapers. Accordingly, a maximum of 12 TV news channels and 12 radio stations, and a maximum of 10 daily newspapers were to be monitored for the global report.



However, GMMP volunteers in India monitored more media than were required for the global report. The original sample selected by monitors in different parts of the country comprised 26 daily newspapers in 10 Indian languages (including English), 13 TV news channels in 6

10 Website of the Registrar of Newspapers for India: <http://rni.nic.in/>

11 Website of the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India: <http://www.trai.gov.in/>

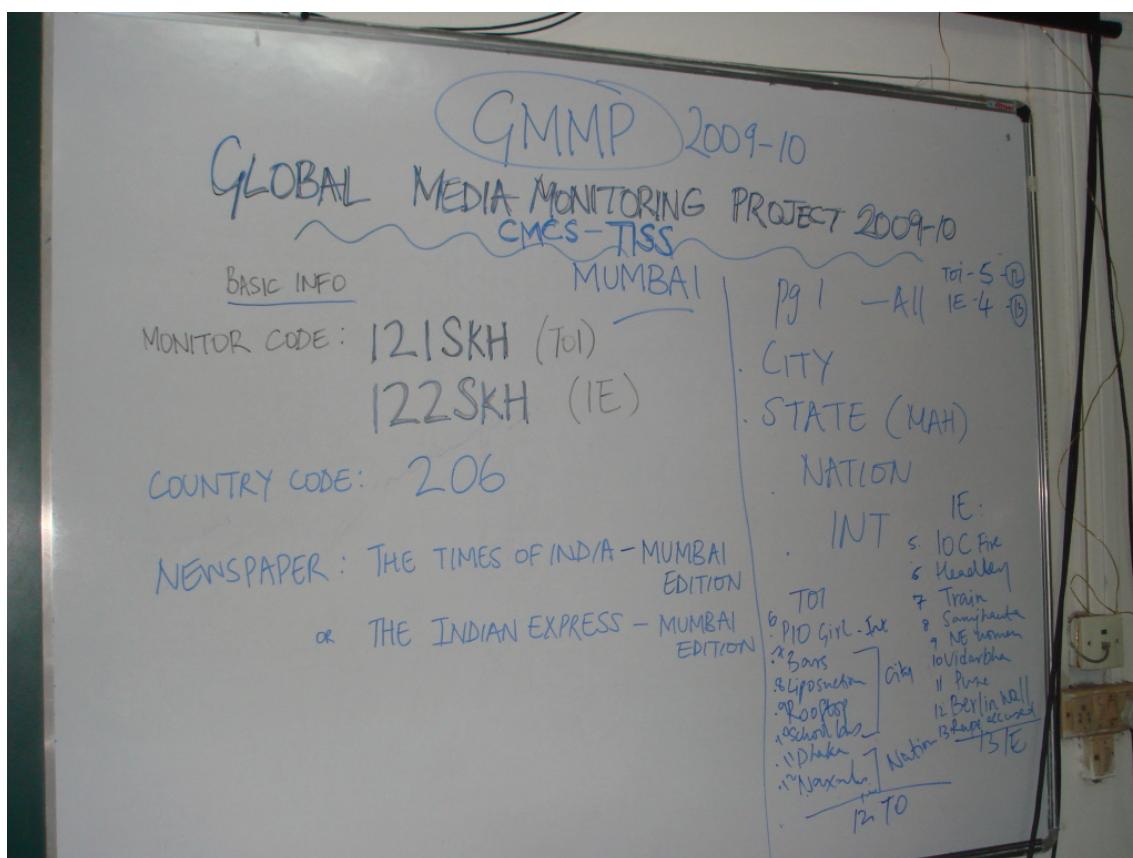
12 "IRS 2009: Top order remains the same," Anushree Chandran, 8 May 2009 (<http://www.livemint.com/2009/05/08220513/IRS-2009-top-order-remains-th.html>)

13 Internet World Stats, Usage and Population Statistics (<http://www.internetworldstats.com/asia/in.htm>)

languages, and 6 radio news bulletins in 5 languages (the latter aired by different stations of All India Radio, the only radio broadcaster within the country currently allowed to disseminate news and current affairs). The attempt was to monitor a cross-section of media in different parts of the country in different languages so that the sample was as representative as possible of the diversity and plurality of the Indian media.

However, some volunteers dropped out and others submitted coding sheets that could not be used – so the final sample was a little smaller: 20 dailies, 11 TV news bulletins, and 5 radio bulletins. The print media covered included newspapers in English, Hindi, Marathi, Gujarati, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, Oriya and Tamil; the TV sample included private news channels as well as Doordarshan in English, Hindi, Kannada, Telugu and Malayalam; radio was represented by AIR bulletins in English, Hindi, Marathi, Telugu and Malayalam.

It must be noted that since GMMP is an entirely volunteer-based initiative, the selection of media for monitoring was largely determined by the number, location and interest of volunteers and the availability/accessibility of media to them, rather than on any established sampling methodology. However, with equal numbers of dailies in English and other Indian languages, a 4:7 ratio of TV bulletins in English and other Indian languages, and 5 languages represented in the radio sample, the final mix of languages is fairly representative (if not entirely proportional). Another point worth noting is that the GMMP effort in India probably represents the most extensive systematic monitoring and analysis of Indian media content – certainly (but perhaps not only) in terms of gender representation.



This is the first country report to emerge from the 15-year GMMP process in India, which began with the first global survey in 1995. It is based on data from the entire sample of 20 daily newspapers, 11 TV news bulletins and 5 radio news bulletins submitted to the GMMP research team for analysis, which included 862 news stories in 9 languages:<sup>14</sup>

<sup>14</sup> The data analysis of all the information from all the participating countries was conducted by Media Monitoring Africa, based in South Africa.

## Newspapers

*The Hindustan Times*, Delhi (English)  
*The Times of India*, Mumbai (English)  
*The Indian Express*, Mumbai (English)  
*The Hindustan Times*, Mumbai (English)  
*Daily News & Analysis*, Mumbai (English)  
*The Hindu*, Chennai (English)  
*Deccan Herald*, Bangalore (English)  
*The Times of India*, Bangalore (English)  
*Daily News & Analysis*, Bangalore (English)  
*Deccan Chronicle*, Hyderabad (English)  
*Mumbai Samachar*, Mumbai (Gujarati)  
*Hindustan*, Delhi (Hindi)  
*Navbharat Times*, Mumbai (Hindi)  
*Prajavani*, Bangalore (Kannada)  
*Malayala Manorama*, Kottayam (Malayalam)  
*Loksatta*, Mumbai (Marathi)  
*Samaj*, Bhubaneshwar (Oriya)  
*Sambad*, Bhubaneshwar (Oriya)  
*Dinathanthi*, Salem (Tamil)  
*Eenadu*, Hyderabad (Telugu)

## TV News

Doordarshan (English)  
NDTV (English),  
CNN-IBN (English)  
Times Now (English)  
Doordarshan (Hindi)  
Aaj Tak (Hindi)  
India TV (Hindi)  
ETV (Kannada)  
Asianet News (Malayalam)  
TV 9 (Telugu)  
TV5 (Telugu)

## Radio News

AIR English  
AIR Hindi  
AIR Malayalam  
AIR Marathi  
AIR Telugu

## **The monitors:**

Some 62 individuals in India – not all members of the NWMI – had initially volunteered to participate in the monitoring and joined the Yahoogroup (gmmpindia) set up to facilitate communication across the country related to the project. Among the original e-group members 7 were men.

Approximately 22 monitors finally participated in the monitoring exercise on 10 November. The volunteers represented various walks of life, including journalism, and were located in different parts of the country (Bangalore, Bhubaneswar, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Kottayam, Mumbai, New Delhi, Pune, Salem). Several of the volunteers



were lecturers/professors who involved students from their respective educational institutions in the monitoring, thereby adding to the number of persons involved in this round of GMMP monitoring in India.

In addition, students in 19 colleges scattered across the country (many outside the large metropolises) participated in the monitoring, covering mainly print media. Among them were several male students. Unfortunately, the coding sheets completed by these students were received too late to be included in the sample from India.

Only one volunteer had participated in an earlier GMMP, although several participants were familiar with previous GMMP reports.

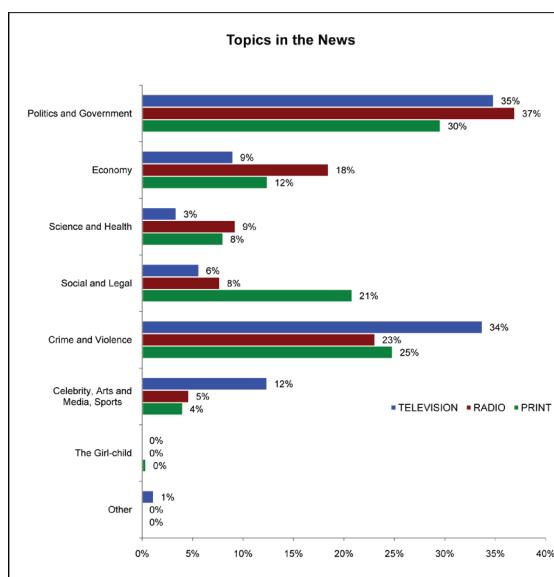
## TOPICS IN THE NEWS

### Topics in the news:<sup>15</sup>

1. It was no surprise that politics and government made the biggest news on monitoring day in India across all mediums. While 37 per cent of the news coverage on radio was related to politics/government, about 35 per cent of the news topics on television and 30 per cent in print were dominated by the same.

Regional results for GMMP 2010 in Asia (which included, besides India, Bangladesh, China, Japan, Kyrgyzstan, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam) also showed the domination of news on politics and government, with 31 per cent of news coverage on television, 30 per cent in print and 28 per cent on radio focused on politics.

2. The second topic that received wide media attention was crime and violence, with 34 per cent of Indian television news devoted to stories on those topics. In comparison, 25 per cent of print news in India was focussed on crime/violence.
3. Twenty one per cent of the stories in the Indian print media were on social and legal topics, including stories on human rights, women and development issues, education, religion and the legal system. About 6 per cent of the news topics featured on TV related to social and legal news.
4. Only 9 per cent of the news topics on television related to the economy, in comparison to 18 per cent on radio and 12 per cent in print. Meanwhile, TV coverage of news on celebrities, arts, media and sports topics was 12 per cent – the highest percentage among all media in India.



<sup>15</sup> The GMMP methodology classifies news stories under seven major topic areas: Politics/Government, Economy, Science/Health, Social/Legal, Crime/Violence, Celebrity/Arts/Media/Sports, and the Girl-child.

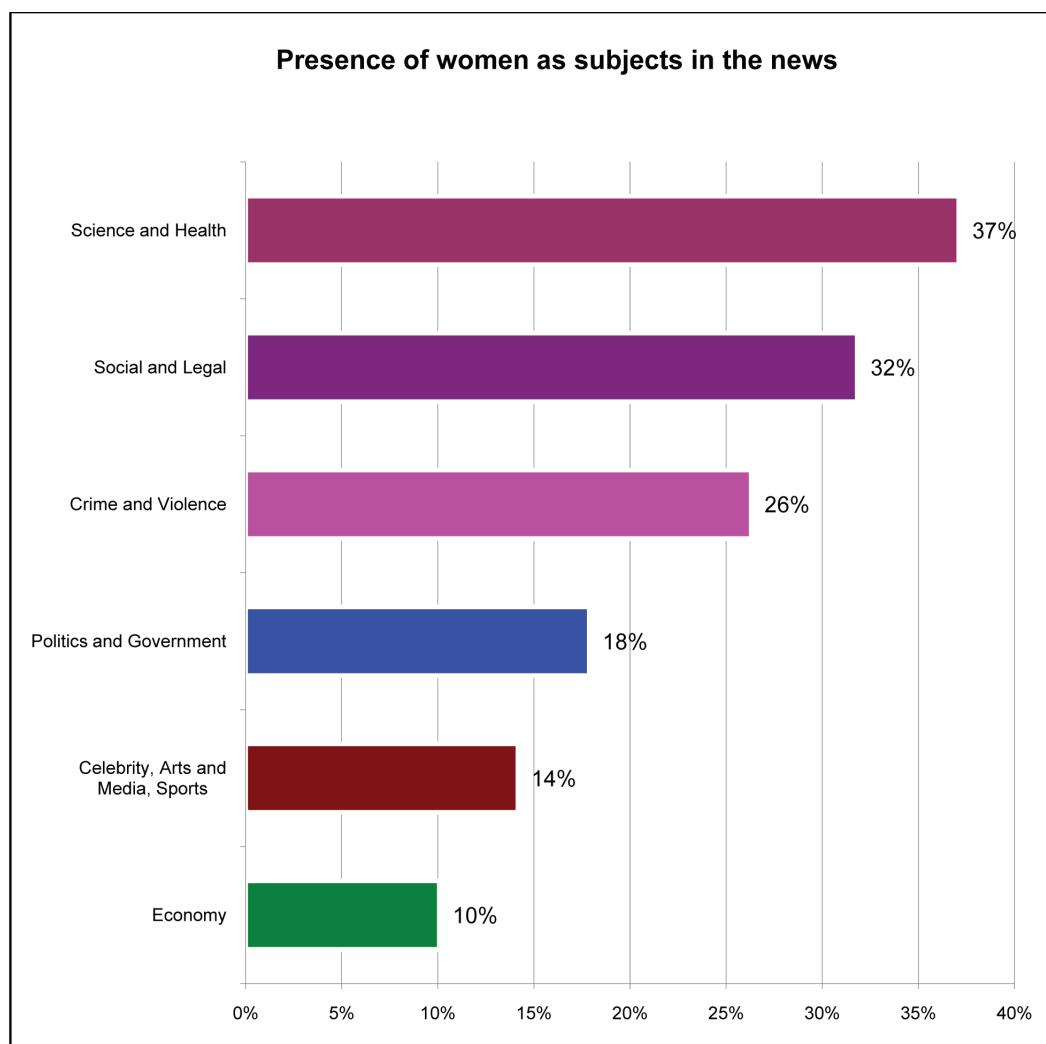
5. Overall, more news stories were reported by male reporters than female reporters; this was true across all media and all news topics, ranging from politics and science to arts and sports.
6. Across all media, stories on politics and government were reported by more than twice as many male reporters than female reporters: 67 per cent of stories on politics/government were reported by male reporters and 33 per cent by female reporters. Analysis of GMMP data from Asia as a whole revealed that more political stories – 43 per cent – were reported by female reporters across the region.
7. Similarly stories on social and legal topics were covered by substantially more male reporters than female reporters: 73 per cent and 27 per cent respectively.
8. A similar proportion was revealed in stories on science and health, with 72 per cent of such stories reported by male journalists and 28 per cent by women. In contrast, across Asia almost 50 per cent of the stories on science and health were covered by female reporters.
9. Stories on the economy and business, too, were reported mainly by men: 71 per cent, compared to 29 per cent by women.
10. However, when it came to topics such as crime and violence and celebrity, arts, media and sports, the difference between male and female reporters was not so stark. About 40 per cent of the stories on crime and violence were reported by female reporters, compared to 60 per cent by male reporters. About 41 per cent of stories on celebrity, arts, media and sports were reported by female reporters, compared to 59 per cent by male reporters.

## THE NEWS

### **Overall presence of women and men in the news in India as news subjects:**

1. The overall presence of women as subjects in the news in India was only 22 per cent across all news topics. In other words just over a fifth of the people heard or read about in the news was female, while the rest (78 per cent) were men. Globally, 24 per cent – less than a quarter, not even one in four – of the people featured in the news was female. In Asia as a whole, women were the news subjects in only 20 per cent of the stories across all news topic categories – in other words, only one fifth of the people heard or read about in the news across the region was female.
2. Men dominated as news subjects in stories relating to politics/government and the economy. Women accounted for only 18 per cent of the subjects in political stories and, even more abysmally, they constituted only 10 per cent of the subjects in stories related to the economy. Across Asia, women were only 16 per cent of the subjects in political stories and 15 per cent of the subjects in economic stories.
3. Women subjects registered a more healthy presence in science and health stories (37 per cent) and in social and legal stories (32 per cent).
4. Interestingly, crime and violence stories had fewer women as subjects. Women constituted only 26 per cent of the subjects in crime/violence stories while 74 per cent of the news subjects in such stories were male. But even more surprising was the low percentage of women in celebrity, arts, media and sports stories, where they formed only 14 per cent of news subjects.

This apparent anomaly can perhaps be attributed to an aspect of the GMMP methodology (see Endnote 1), which includes celebrity and arts in a single category, along with sports. Sports coverage in India is largely male-centric, with the men's cricket team in particular hogging most of the sports news space across all media.



### **Presence of female and male news subjects by medium – radio, TV and newspapers:**

While news in all Indian media was dominated by male subjects, radio was found to be particularly weak with regard to the presence of female news subjects. Only 13 per cent of news subjects on Indian radio news were female. In comparison, women comprised 24 per cent of the news subjects in print news and 20 per cent of the news subjects in TV news. A similar pattern prevailed across Asia with respect to the press and television news, with women constituting 20 per cent of the news subjects in both. However, women fared better in radio news across the region, registering a 21 per cent presence.

The low showing of women as news subjects in radio news in India is particularly significant since radio news is at present confined to the state/public broadcaster.

### **Presence of female and male news subjects as news sources:**

Seventy eight per cent of the news subjects who were sources of information were male while only 22 per cent were female across all story types – local, national and international. Within local stories, 80 per cent of the news sources were male while only 20 per cent were female. In both local and national stories, the difference between female and male news sources was as huge as 20:80. Surprisingly, and more positively from a gender-justice perspective, in stories on international affairs, 41 per cent of the news sources were female and 59 per cent male.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> It may or may not be relevant to note that a significant proportion of the international stories featured in the Indian media are from international news sources.

## **Presence of female and male news subjects by story topic:**

1. More than three quarters (78 per cent) of news subjects across most story topics were men. The proportion rose further in stories on domestic politics and government (local, regional and national), in which 92 per cent of the news subjects were male. Stories on the rural economy and agriculture barely had any female subjects (only 5 per cent). Across Asia, too, only 9 per cent of the news stories on rural economy/agriculture had female subjects.
2. Significantly, stories related to national defence and military spending as well as economic policies and strategies featured no female subjects.
3. Nearly a quarter (23 per cent) of the news subjects in stories about disasters was female. In contrast, women comprised only 8 per cent of the subjects in sports stories.
4. Women made their presence felt, to a certain extent, as news subjects in stories on environment, nature and pollution (33 per cent); poverty, housing and social welfare (34 per cent); education (38 per cent); violent crime (43 per cent); and medicine, health and hygiene (51 per cent).
5. Women dominated stories on peace, negotiations and treaties (61 per cent)<sup>17</sup> as well as stories on celebrity news (61 per cent).
6. But an even more intriguing finding was that men dominated even in stories where women were supposed to be the focus. Thus, 60 per cent of the news subjects in stories on women in political power and women electoral candidates (local, regional and national) were men. In some news stories, however, such as women's participation in economic processes, women subjects dominated (75 per cent).
7. Stories on gender-based violence, domestic violence, rape and trafficking had an equal number of male and female subjects (50 per cent).

## **Who are the newsmakers?**

Men outnumbered women in almost all occupational categories represented in the news. The only categories with a larger proportion of women than men were: homemaker-parent, celebrity-artist-actor-writer-singer and activist-civil society worker.

The largest proportion of women appearing as news subjects (82 per cent) belonged to the homemaker or parent category; only 18 per cent of male news subjects were placed in this category. The next largest category of women news subjects (59 per cent) was celebrities, artists, actors, singers, etc. Almost 51 per cent of activists or workers in civil society organisations in the news were women while 40 per cent of the academic experts, educational professionals and teachers and 35 per cent of bureaucrats, government officials and politicians in the news were women. Women sportspersons barely made it to the news, registering just 4 per cent in that category.

## **Function of female and male news subjects:**

Most news stories featured men as the main subject (78 per cent) – i.e., more than three quarters of the stories analysed revolved around men. An overwhelming proportion of experts/commentators (82 per cent) and spokespersons (87 per cent) featured in the news was male. In 88 per cent of news stories even the eye-witnesses were male. In most cases, women featured in the news were among the ‘person on the street’ quoted in the story or represented ‘popular opinion’ (54 per cent).

## **Constructing ‘victims’ in the news:<sup>18</sup>**

According to GMMP findings most news subjects were not portrayed as victims by the Indian media. Of those identified as victims, about 39 per cent were female and 61 per cent were male.

The subjects portrayed as victims of non-domestic sexual violence or abuse, sexual harassment, rape and trafficking were, expectedly, 100 per cent female. Of the subjects who were labelled

<sup>17</sup> It could be that this description (“stories on peace, negotiations and treaties”) applied mainly to international news stories.

<sup>18</sup> In the GMMP monitoring system a person is considered a victim either if the word ‘victim’ is used to describe her/him or if the news story implies through the use of particular language or images that the person is a victim.

victims of domestic violence<sup>19</sup>, 63 per cent were female and 37 per cent were men. Of the subjects who were portrayed as victims of accidents, natural disasters, poverty and disease, only 32 per cent were female and 68 per cent were male. But most significant was the fact that of the subjects who were portrayed as victims of violation based on religion, tradition and cultural belief, only 9 per cent were female compared to the 91 per cent who were male.

### **Identity and family status in the news:**

Women were often defined in the news in terms of their familial relationships (wife of, daughter of etc.): 30 per cent of the female news subjects in the Indian news media were identified by their family status while only 5 per cent of male news subjects were similarly identified. In contrast, only 19 per cent of the female news subjects across Asia were identified by their family status.

Interestingly, more female reporters identified women news subjects by family status (25 per cent) than did male reporters (14 per cent). In Asia as a whole, however, more male reporters identified women subjects by family status (16 per cent) than did female reporters (14 per cent).

### **Images in the news:**

More female news subjects (27 per cent) appeared in photographs accompanying articles than male news subjects (18 per cent).

## **WHO DELIVERS THE NEWS?**

### **Presenters**

About 34 per cent of the news stories in the Indian broadcast media (radio and TV) were presented by women. Across Asia almost 48 per cent of the news stories on radio and TV were presented by women.

### **Announcers:**

While there were marginally more women announcers on Indian television compared to Indian radio and marginally more male announcers on Indian radio than TV, overall there seems to be a significant number of women announcers in the broadcast media in India. This was a noticeable trend in other countries in Asia, too: women announced 51 per cent of the stories on radio and television in the region.

### **Presence of female announcers on radio and TV across stories:**

Less than half the announcers on Indian radio and television were women. About 44 per cent of the stories on radio were announced by women while 56 per cent of the stories on radio were announced by men. On television, 45 per cent of the stories were announced by women and 55 per cent by men. Across Asia, more than half (58 per cent) of the stories on TV were announced by women.

### **Presence of women and men as announcers in domestic and foreign stories:**

While approximately 41 per cent of the national news stories and about 54 per cent of the local stories on Indian radio and television were announced by women, 71 per cent of the international stories were announced by men.

<sup>19</sup> In the GMMP monitoring system, domestic violence refers to violence by a partner, mother, husband, father, or other family member and would refer to psychological harm, physical assault, spousal rape, murder. There were only 8 such stories, with 3 being about female subjects (37.5 per cent) and 5 featuring male subjects 63 per cent. This is a much lower number of stories than about those featuring other types of victims such as victims of actions where there were 50 and victims of discrimination where there were 23 such cases coded.

### **Presence of women and men as announcers in major news topics:**

Sixty per cent of the stories on economy, science and health on Indian TV and radio were announced by women, compared to only 38 per cent of stories on politics and government. Stories on crime and violence were announced more or less equally by both men and women. However, over half (57 per cent) the stories on celebrity, arts, media and sports were announced by women. The regional findings were similar although 50 per cent of the stories on politics across Asia were announced by women.

### **Reporters:**

On GMMP day in India, 34 per cent of the news stories in print and 43 per cent of the news on TV were found to be reported by women. In radio news, unfortunately, none of the reporters were women.

### **Domestic and international news by female and male reporters:**

Forty three per cent of the stories that were local in scope, 42 per cent that were international in scope and 23 per cent of stories that were national in scope were covered by female reporters.<sup>20</sup>

### **Major story topics by female and male reporters:**

About 30 per cent of the stories on politics and government in India on the GMMP monitoring day were reported by women while 70 per cent were reported by men. Although only 11 per cent of the stories on the economy were reported by women, 36 per cent of the stories on crime and violence and 33 per cent of the stories on celebrity, arts, media and sports were reported by women.

### **Reporters and news sources:**

Thirty five per cent of female news sources were found in stories reported by women reporters while 65 per cent of female news sources were found in stories reported by male reporters. 34 per cent of male news sources were found in stories reported by female reporters while 66 per cent of male news sources were found in stories reported by male reporters.

## **GENDER AND THE NEWS**

### **Sex of reporters in stories with women as a central focus:**

Only 12 per cent of the news stories covered in the survey had women as the central focus (i.e., focussed specifically on one or more women).

While 35 per cent of the news stories where women were the central focus were reported by female reporters, 65 per cent of such stories were by male reporters.

But it is important to note that, overall, more stories were covered by male reporters than female reporters. In the fewer number of total news stories reported by women, a fair proportion had women as the central focus of the story.” Seven of the 39 stories reported by females, or 18%, had women as the central focus, compared to only 13 of 124 stories reported by men (10%). Thus, on the GMMP monitoring day, female reporters focused on women with greater frequency than men.

<sup>20</sup> A substantial proportion of international news in the Indian media is sourced internationally rather than reported by staff journalists.

## **Stories with women as a central focus by topic:**

The stories with women as the central focus included a mixed bag of stories on women electoral candidates, changing gender relations, the legal system and beauty contests. About 43 per cent of the stories on celebrity news, births, marriages and deaths had women as the central focus, while 20 per cent of the stories on arts, entertainment, leisure, cinema and theatre had women as the central focus.<sup>21</sup>

## **Stories that highlight issues of gender equality or inequality issues:**

Only 5 per cent of the news stories covered in the survey highlighted gender equality or inequality.

Of all the stories analysed for GMMP 2010 from India, only 23 stories by female reporters and 21 by male reporters highlighted issues of gender equality/inequality. Among the few stories that highlighted equality and/or inequality, most were related to topics such as violent crime, gender-based violence, women in political power, domestic politics, and religion and culture. Male and female journalists appear to highlight such issues more or less equally: about half the stories highlighting gender equality/inequality were reported by women reporters and the rest by male reporters.

## **Challenging or reinforcing stereotypes?**

Stereotypes about women and men abound in the media. While some stereotypes are fairly universal – for example, women are generally perceived to be non-ambitious, irrational, fragile and dependent while men are usually regarded as ambitious, rational, strong and independent – many others are culture-specific.

GMMP 2010 overwhelmingly found that gender stereotypes continued to prevail in a major way in all media. Nearly two thirds (63 per cent) of the news stories from the Indian media that were analysed were found to reinforce gender stereotypes while only 9 per cent challenged them.

73 per cent of the stories on crime and violence reinforced gender stereotypes, but so did 72 per cent of the stories on science and health, 62 per cent of the stories on the economy, 60 per cent of the stories on celebrities, arts, media and sports, and 59 per cent of the stories on social and legal issues. Almost 87 per cent of the stories on religion, culture and tradition (which fell under the broad theme of social-legal) also reinforced stereotypes.

While 13 per cent of the news stories on politics and government challenged stereotypes, almost 55 per cent of stories on that topic reinforced gender stereotypes. However, within the politics/government category, almost half the stories on women electoral candidates challenged stereotypes.

The GMMP 2010 India results also showed that 12 per cent of the stories by female reporters challenged gender stereotypes while only 7 per cent of stories by male reporters did so. Further, 71 per cent of stories by male reporters reinforced gender stereotypes while only 49 per cent of stories by female reporters did so.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

- Despite recent changes in the media landscape in India, as elsewhere, the agenda of the news media has clearly not altered significantly, going by the findings of the GMMP 2010 monitoring of Indian media, which provide a fairly representative picture of news coverage in a cross-section of media across the country on a routine news day.
- The priorities reflected in the distribution of stories across the major topic areas points to an urgent need for a radical transformation of the news media agenda if issues of particular concern to society in general and women in particular are to be more adequately covered.

<sup>21</sup> See End Note on the clubbing of topics in categories.

- Many other aspects of news coverage also need to change if society is to be realistically and accurately portrayed, and if women are to be proportionately and fairly represented, in the media.
- For instance, it is surely not right that less than a quarter of the people heard, seen or read about in mainstream broadcast and print news across the country is female.
- It is surely not right that nearly three quarters of news stories revolve around men.
- It is surely not right that only 12 per cent of all news stories focus specifically on women.
- It is surely not right that over four-fifths of all experts/commentators and spokespersons featured in the news is male.
- It is surely not right that women are six times as likely as men to be identified primarily by their familial roles (wives, mothers, etc.).
- It is surely not right that women news subjects are concentrated in a few occupation categories when observable reality is quite different.
- It is surely not right that the news media by and large continue to present a world where women are almost absent in positions of authority or responsibility outside the home.
- It is surely not right that only 5 per cent of all news stories highlight gender equality/inequality.
- It cannot be right that nearly two thirds of news stories reinforce gender stereotypes while less than 10 per cent challenge them.
- It does not appear right that less than half the presenters and announcers on Indian radio and television are women.
- Nor does it seem right that women still constitute only about a third of news reporters in print and less than half of the news reporters on TV, while there appears to be a virtual absence of female reporters in radio news.

The findings of the GMMP 2010 in India confirm that women, who constitute at least half the world's and the average country's population, are not proportionately or properly represented in the Indian media today. While certain relatively small categories of women tend to be almost over-represented, the large numbers that make up other categories continue to be under-represented. With media content still, by and large, reflecting a male-centric view of the world and of what is important, many issues that are particularly crucial to women's lives appear to feature low down in the scale of what is regarded as newsworthy. When women do appear on the media's radar, they do so as the exception (in terms of success in any given field) or as potential consumers rather than as equal citizens who are affected by and must have a say in all the events and issues that make news, as well as the many that don't.

The primary reason why it is important for all those concerned about gender equality and justice to continue to focus on gender and the media was pinpointed in an editorial in the daily paper brought out by gender/media activists during the Beijing Plus Ten review meeting at the UN in New York in March 2005, which highlighted and criticised the unfortunate and inexplicable absence of Section J (on women and media) from the conference agenda: "Institutions that are not changed cannot become agents of change. Just as gender has to be mainstreamed in government it has to be mainstreamed in the media."

Why is any of this important? Here are two convincing answers:

"What, in the end, could be more central to free speech than that every segment of society should have a voice?"

*Justice Athalia Molokomme  
Attorney General, Botswana*

"When every voice counts we can stop counting the voices."

*Colleen Lowe Morna  
Executive Director, Gender Links, South Africa*



## THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

A number of sustained activities can help promote more fair and balanced representation of women and men in the news. It may be useful to think in terms of initiatives that can be put in place fairly quickly and others that may require a longer period of preparation.

Some activities that can be implemented in the relatively short-term are:

- Regular, systematic media monitoring and analysis of gender representation<sup>22</sup> in the news.
- Awareness raising (e.g., through a blog enabling quick comments on gender representation in the news media and regular reports on the findings of ongoing media monitoring exercises)
- Training in journalism as if gender matters – both through integration of the perspective into journalism courses at various educational institutions and through in-house workshops for working journalists in various media houses
- Institution of gender/media awards for gender-aware journalism covering specific genres (e.g., news reports, features, current affairs programmes, documentaries) in print, broadcast and online media – with the possible addition, later, of counter-awards for sexist and/or gender-blind content
- Advocacy for gender-aware codes of media ethics and guidelines for media self-regulation (and/or drafting of gendered code/guidelines for consideration/adoption by media houses and professional associations)

Among activities that can be taken up in the longer-term are:

1. A larger baseline survey to provide an overview of gender in the editorial content of a cross-section of media in the country (and/or the region).
2. An audience study to generate information about media consumption patterns, as well as likes and dislikes vis-à-vis media content, among women and men – with special focus on audience perceptions about and opinions on gender portrayal and coverage in media content.
3. Audio-visual toolkits, with data and examples, to build capacity and promote gender-conscious practice among media practitioners and media trainees/students.
4. Training and awareness-raising programmes/workshops to build capacity and promote gender-conscious practice among media professionals across the board, including management.

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i Please refer to Footnote 15 and note that the GMMP coding system placed social and legal stories in one category of news topics. Similarly celebrity, arts, media and sports were placed altogether in another news topic category. In some cases, this bunching together of different topic areas may have led to some skewing of the findings. For example, under the present system it is not possible to distinguish between coverage of social and legal issues, or between coverage of celebrities and, say, sports. So, for instance, since the two topics – celebrity and sports – are both merged in one category in GMMP 2010, it is not clear whether more female reporters covered celebrity news and more male reporters covered sports or whether celebrity news had more female news subjects and sports news had more male subjects.

It is important to note that only general news pages within daily newspapers and regular/general news bulletins in the broadcast media were covered by the survey – business and sports pages/sections and programmes were not. Neither were pages devoted to opinion/comment. So the references to news topics (and news subjects) throughout this document relate to stories that appeared on general news pages in Indian daily newspapers and general/regular news bulletins on TV and radio in the country.

In addition, please note that the data analysis of news topics revealed that on monitoring day the Indian media carried 0 per cent stories on the girl-child, a stand-alone category in GMMP 2010. Stories coded under ‘the girl child’ were those in which the emphasis was *exclusively* on the girl child. While there were no stories on the girl child that day, this does not mean that there were no stories related to women on that day in the Indian media. Stories that were related to women were coded in the ‘social and legal’ category.

## **Annex 1. Methodology**

Each participating country was assigned a specific number of newspapers, and radio and television newscasts to monitor based on the national media density. This was done to ensure that global results would reliably reflect the distribution of the world's news media, while respecting the need to balance results from smaller countries with those of larger countries. The number and selection of media outlets monitored in each country reflects the density and diversity – audience, ownership, language – of media in each country.

Efforts were made to ensure a uniform understanding and application of the methodology across the world. Clear instructions on how to code were provided. Some regional and national coordinators benefited from face-to-face or virtual training while others and the broader global teams of volunteers developed skills in monitoring through online self-administered tutorials. In one region, national coordinators were trained by the regional coordinator via teleconference. In some countries, national coordinators provided advance training to volunteer monitoring groups.

In each country monitors coded the most important television and radio newscasts of the day in their entirety. For newspapers, 12 to 14 stories appearing on the main news pages – defined as the pages devoted to national, international and, in some cases, regional news – were coded. Internet news was included for the first time in the global monitoring on a pilot basis in a few countries selected on the basis of the importance of the Internet as a news source for local news consumers.

The quantitative research captured statistical data on news topics, women and men in the news, the types of news stories in which they appeared, and their function in the news. Media Monitoring Africa (MMA) in South Africa was responsible for the quantitative analysis.

An in-depth and more nuanced analysis of selected news stories examined the means, themes and patterns of gender in the news. This qualitative analysis took into account the role of story angle, language and visual representations in constructing and sustaining or challenging gender stereotypes.

A full discussion of the methodology, including considerations on reliability, accuracy and limitations, is contained in the global report Who Makes the News? The Global Media Monitoring Project 2010 (which can be accessed at [www.whomakesthenews.org](http://www.whomakesthenews.org) subsequent to launch).



## Annex 2. List of Monitors

Aditi Bhaduri	Kolkata	
Anju Munshi	Kolkata	
Anupama Srinivasan	Chennai	
Archna Kumar	New Delhi	(with undergraduate & post-graduate students of the Department of Development Communication & Extension, Lady Irwin College, New Delhi, and junior faculty members Shweta Suman and Sunaina Batra
Deepa Kandasamy	Salem	
Dipti Kotian	Bangalore	(with students of the Post Graduate Diploma in Journalism course, Indian Institute of Journalism and New Media, Bangalore)
Elisa Patnaik	Bhubaneswar	
Sarojini Nayak	Bhubaneswar	
Mira Desai	Mumbai	(with students of the Post Graduate Diploma in Communication & Media, Masters in Extension Education and Masters in Human Ecology and Community Development of the SNDT Women's University, Mumbai)
G. NagaMallika	Hyderabad	
C. Vanaja	Hyderabad	
Kanchan Malik	Hyderabad	
Ranjit Monga	New Delhi	
Sameera Khan	Mumbai	(with post-graduate students at the Centre for Media and Culture Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai)
Santhosh George	Kottayam	
Gayathri Mammen	Kottayam	
Jiji Johnson	Kottayam	
Susan Simon	Kottayam	
Shangon Das Gupta	Bangalore	
Shashi Iyer	Bangalore	
Smitha Menon	Mumbai	
Geeta Seshu	Mumbai	





The India report of the GMMP 2010 was written by Ammu Joseph (who coordinated the GMMP process in India on behalf of the NWMI) and Sameera Khan, with inputs and assistance from Sharmila Joshi, Laxmi Murthy, Kalpana Sharma, Shangon Dasgupta and Shashi Iyer.

**WACC**  
308 Main Street  
Toronto  
ON M4C 4X7  
Canada

Tel: +1 416 691 1999  
Fax: +1 416 691 1997  
Email: [info@waccglobal.org](mailto:info@waccglobal.org)  
Web: [www.waccglobal.org](http://www.waccglobal.org)  
[www.whomakesthenews.org](http://www.whomakesthenews.org)

**Network of Women in Media, India**  
c/o 71, S.T. Bed Layout  
Koramangala  
Bangalore 560 034  
India

E-mail: [info@nwmindia.org](mailto:info@nwmindia.org)  
Web: [www.nwmindia.org](http://www.nwmindia.org)