

**WHO
MAKES THE
NEWS?**



Kyrgyzstan

Global Media Monitoring Project 2010 National Report



Acknowledgements



GMMP 2010 is licensed under creative commons using an Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs.

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.



Noncommercial. You may not use this work for commercial purposes.

No derivative Works. You may not alter, transform, or build upon this work.

For any use or distribution, you must make clear to others the license terms of this work.

Your fair use and other rights are in now way affected by the above.



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.'¹
- 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.²
- 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.

National context

- In Kyrgyzstan, gender issues are still important with respect to all spheres of life. For example the level of economic activity among women is lower than for men in the republic. Another important aspect of the gender gap involves access to education. The growing commercialization and rising costs of education, however, are forcing parents more often to make a choice as to which of their children will receive schooling. In a majority of these cases, parents' decisions are not in favor of their daughters. If such financial pressures continue, as is likely, there is a strong potential for an increased gender gap in education. Gender discrimination often begins long before a girl enters school, however. Deep-rooted traditions of a preference for the son can result in both passive and active neglect. A girl maybe given less food than her brothers, is less likely to see a doctor when ill, is prevented from attending school in order to help with household chores and child care. As adults, women often face legal and institutional barriers to economic activity outside the home, including laws or customs that deny them the right to own land, inherit property, establish credit or move up in their field of work. Gender inequality has particularly increased during the transitional period. Poverty and impoverishment have affected women to a greater degree; this is explained by their reproductive function and patriarchal traditions in society. In contrast to the majority of third world countries, the literacy rate of women is not significantly

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

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

different than that of men. Therefore, this indicator does not suggest a serious hindrance for the social advancement of women.

- The experience of Rural Women's Association "Alga" shows that women can be active agents' of social change for the family and for the whole community. Thus, Alga participated in the Global Media Monitoring Project as it is great opportunity to draw attention of the society to gender issues and the role of Mass Media in the development of consciousness.
- News media remain the major and most influential source of information, ideas and opinion for most people around the world. It is a key element of the public and private space in which people, nations and societies live. A nation or society that does not fully know itself cannot respond to its citizens' aspirations. Who and what appears in the news and how people and events are portrayed matters. Who is left out and what is not covered are equally important. Across the world, the cultural underpinnings of gender inequality and discrimination against women are reinforced through the media.

Executive Summary

- The Global Media Monitoring Project (GMMP) is the most extensive global research of gender in news media ever undertaken. The importance of media monitoring as a tool for change was officially recognised by the United Nations for the first time in Section J of the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, where NGOs and professional media associations are urged to 'encourage the establishment of media watch groups that can monitor the media and consult with the media to ensure that women's needs and concerns are properly reflected'. The first Global Media Monitoring Day took place in 1995. Since that time, more than 100 countries have participated in the GMMP.
- Kyrgyzstan participated in the GMMP for the first time. November 10, 2009 was an ordinary day for the country's newsmakers, but for the Rural Women's Association's team of volunteers it was a very exciting day of Monitoring. During Monitoring Day November 10, 2009 more than 130 news stories were recorded and analyzed.
- The main finding of the Monitoring Day is that women are dramatically under-represented in the news. Only 19% of news subjects in print media were women, 15% of radio news subjects and 30% of TV news subjects were women. Women's points of view are rarely heard in the topics that dominate the news agenda. In stories on the economy 43% are women. Even in stories on celebrities, arts and media, male voices dominate as 72% of the subjects of those stories were men. As authorities and experts, women barely feature in news stories. Expert opinion is overwhelmingly male. So, even though women are physically visible, there is lack of female perspectives in the news stories.
- This and other results of the GMMP will be used for advocacy and lobbying activities and to promote dialogue with the media. Hopefully it will be dialogue which is not simply about trying to get certain issues or events covered in the media, but about working to promote an entire perspective: a gender-aware vision within the media.
- It was vital for us in Kyrgyzstan to participate GMMP as it is a real honor to be part of this unique project to promote gender equality in and through the media around the world.

A DAY IN THE NEWS IN KYRGYZSTAN

10 November 2009 – was an ordinary Tuesday with reports on current events.

- The main newspaper story was the official visit by the President of Kyrgyzstan, Kurmanbek Bakiyev, to Turkey and his participation at the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Next main story was the appointment of Maxim Bakiyev, the President's son, as Head of the newly created State Agency for Investments and Development. Local TV channels mostly reflected on the energy crisis in the country and the snow fall the night before November 10, 2009. As panic over virus H1N1 was atop the news agenda around the world, local threats and the lack of medicines and medical masks were high lighted in TV news. Radio channels also mostly described snowfall and absence of medicines and medical masks in the country ahead of the possible epidemic of H1N1.

THE CONTEXT

- According to the Law on Mass Media of Kyrgyzstan, Mass Media is understood to mean newspapers, magazines or journals, and attachments to them, information agencies, TV (cable, broadcast TV) and

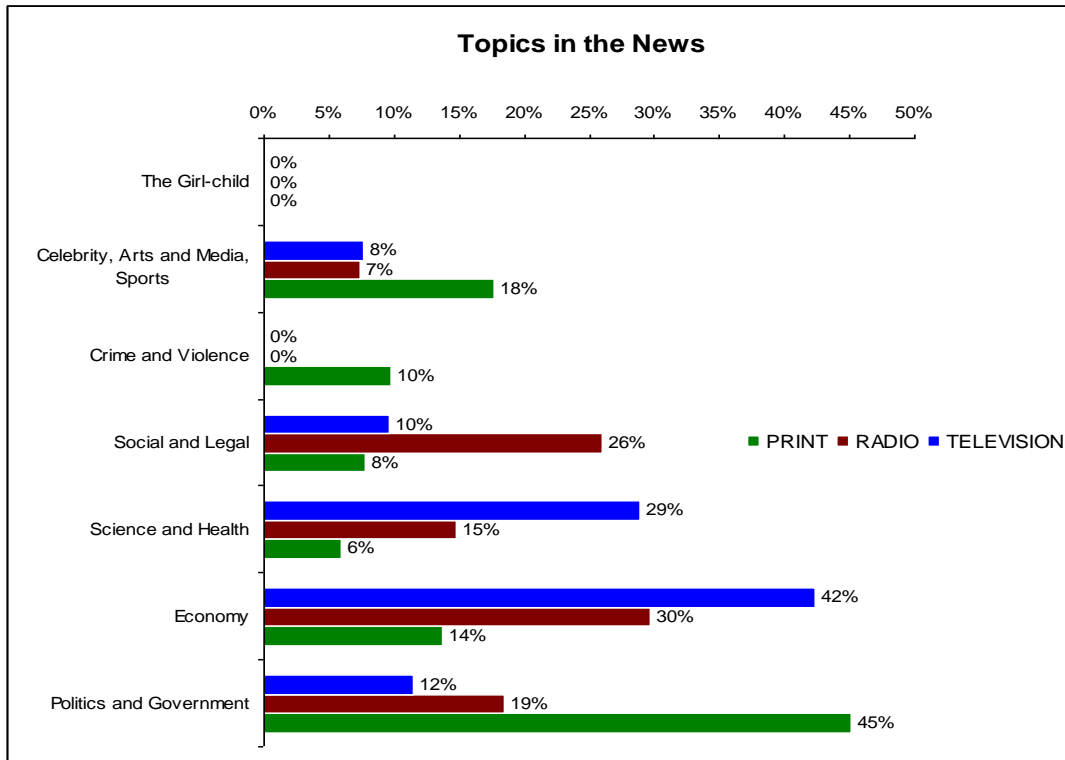
radio broadcast, cinema, documentary publications, electronic information communication, and also other print, photo, mechanic, and electronic means of information supply. By this Law and other Legal Acts, mass media in Kyrgyz Republic are free and abide by the Constitution of Kyrgyz Republic. Everyone has an opportunity to express their opinion and convictions in mass media. Mass media have the right, without limitations, to collect, search for, receive, distribute information, except for certain circumstances as set out in the law. Mass Media have a responsibility to ensure that all the published information is true and authentic in an order set out in the Legislation. No provision shall be made for censorship.

- Most Kyrgyz newspapers are tabloids with 8 to 16 pages per issue. Twelve pages are average. Most are printed overnight and hence are morning editions. Later editions are unknown, and Sunday newspapers are rare. The Friday editions are the largest in volume with 32 pages and also contain the most advertisements, often up to 50 percent, and commanding the highest prices for ads. Otherwise advertising rarely exceeds 20 percent of the content and particularly in those newspapers out of favor with the government; this percentage may be as low as one percent.
- Of the urban centers in Kyrgyzstan, 10 have some form of electronic or print media. The largest and most competitive market is in Bishkek with 18 newspapers, 11 radio stations, and 4 TV stations (data from 2009). Twenty-four smaller urban centers in Kyrgyzstan claim to have newspapers, but it is usually only one local newspaper (though Bishkek newspapers are circulated in these cities). For example the city of Jalalabad, the fourth largest city, has four local newspapers, but they only publish once per week. Similarly a city like Karakol in the mountains of Eastern Kyrgyzstan boasts seven newspapers, but circulation is significantly less than 5,000, and the papers are only published once per week.
- The state controls the television and much of the radio, and these outlets receive significant subsidies, which permit the government to influence the media. While the power of the government to affect and in some cases silence media agents (many of whom were imprisoned, fled, or faced trial on flimsy charges) has been clearly shown, it might be suggested that in lieu of a strong vocal opposition to the president, the fact that there is independent media who still voice opposition and protest suggests that there may be hope for some form of editorial influence on government policies.
- The most serious problem facing the provision of an independent media in Kyrgyzstan is the attitude and policies of the government. In the earliest years of independence there was cause for hope that the media would grow to become a solid force in the progress of the nation. By the late 1990s the situation had begun to deteriorate with a significant growth in the number of lawsuits, harassment of journalists by means of intimidation, and use of the taxation system to challenge the existence of an independent media.
- GMMP local team selected Mass Media for monitoring based on the criteria given in the instructions: that the media has a bigger audience or widespread circulation, that it has a strong reputation for news, and that there was a balance of ownership of Mass Media between state news and private news channels. Thus, there were selected:
- Radio:
 1. Europe +: it is local branch of big Europe+ Radio Corporation, but the news segment is produced in Kyrgyzstan. This radio channel is very popular among youth and adults also. The language of broadcasting is Russian. Radio is popular mostly in urban areas. Lots of people listen to Europe+ while driving, in public transportation or in cafés. The political position is neutral, it never takes someone's position. Newscasts of this radio just overview events.
 2. Russkaya Volna: it is local branch of a Russian private radio company which mostly broadcasts from the Russian Federation, but news is produced in Kyrgyzstan. The language is also Russian and this station is popular among Russian speaking listeners in Bishkek. Newscasts of this radio just overview events.
 3. Kyrgyzstan obondoru: this local radio channel is very popular among the rural and Kyrgyz speaking population, especially youth. It is broadcast in the Kyrgyz language. Political position is neutral. Newscasts of this radio just overview events.
 4. Kabarlar: it should be pointed out that it is the foremost radio station among the few that are geared towards news and editorial analysis. It is in the Kyrgyz and Russian languages. For the GMMP there the Kyrgyz language edition was chosen. The reach of this radio station is widespread. Kabarlar is also broadcast abroad.

- Television:
 1. NTS: popular among urban areas, especially Bishkek. News broadcasts are in Kyrgyz and Russian languages (by turn). For the GMMP the Kyrgyz language edition was recorded. The political position is neutral. Newscasts of TV channel just overview events, sometimes with mild critique of Government.
 2. NBT: Besides news, NBT produces talk shows or reports on events, or on famous people in the country. The political position is neutral. Newscasts of this TV channel just overview events and sometimes critique the government.
 3. Channel 5: this popular TV channel is the first private TV channel to offer full 24 hour broadcasting with locally produced programs, talk shows and other TV products. It is both in the Kyrgyz and Russian languages and is popular with the major part of population. For the GMMP the Kyrgyz language edition was recorded. Recorded edition was very neutral, mostly for international affairs.
 4. KTR: Ala Too is the First National TV and Radio Company and newscasts are in Kyrgyz and Russian (by turn). It was state controlled in the past, but last year by Decree of President it was reformed into a public TV station with a board of directors, however generally it is still a state controlled TV Company. The target audience is the whole country. It is a leader of TV channels and Companies among population.
- Newspapers:
 1. Erkin – Too: this is a state controlled newspaper in the Kyrgyz language distributed around the country whose target audience is mostly adult and middle aged people.
 2. Kyrgyz Tuusu: this state controlled newspaper in Kyrgyz is also distributed around the country and attracts adult, middle-aged and youth, but has different columns for different age and interest groups.
 3. Nazar: this private newspaper in Kyrgyz targets adults and middle aged people. The editorial board represents newspaper as the opposition for those governing the State.
 4. El Sozu: it is private newspaper which is critical of the governing state. Like the Nazar newspaper, it is distributed just in the capital and environs, not to the whole country on regular basis.

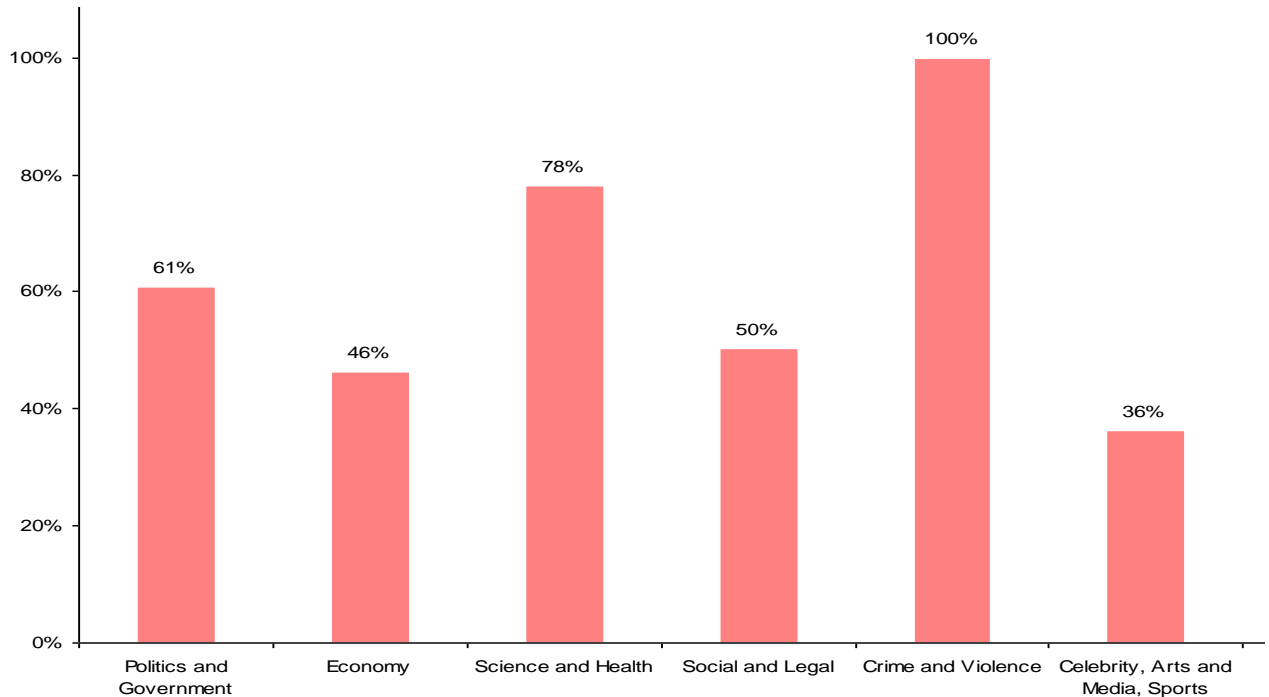
TOPICS IN THE NEWS

- **Topics in the news:** the topics that dominated the newspapers were politics and government (at 45% of newspaper content). On television, the economy dominated at 42% of the stories, while radio news was about the economy in 30% of stories, 26% of stories on radio were about social and legal issues and 19% about politics. There were no stories on girl child, women or gender issues.



- News stories are mostly presented by women, anchors or journalists. 131 reporters and news presenters were coded of whom 56% (73) were female and 44% (58) were male. Negative news about crime and violence or social issues such as science and health (issues related to H1N1 epidemic, and news on politics and government were presented by women. Positive news stories related to celebrities and sport events and to serious economic issues were presented by men. These figures suggest that male reporters are assigned to serious topics and women are left to the social sphere or have strong associations with vulnerability (especially while presenting crime news).

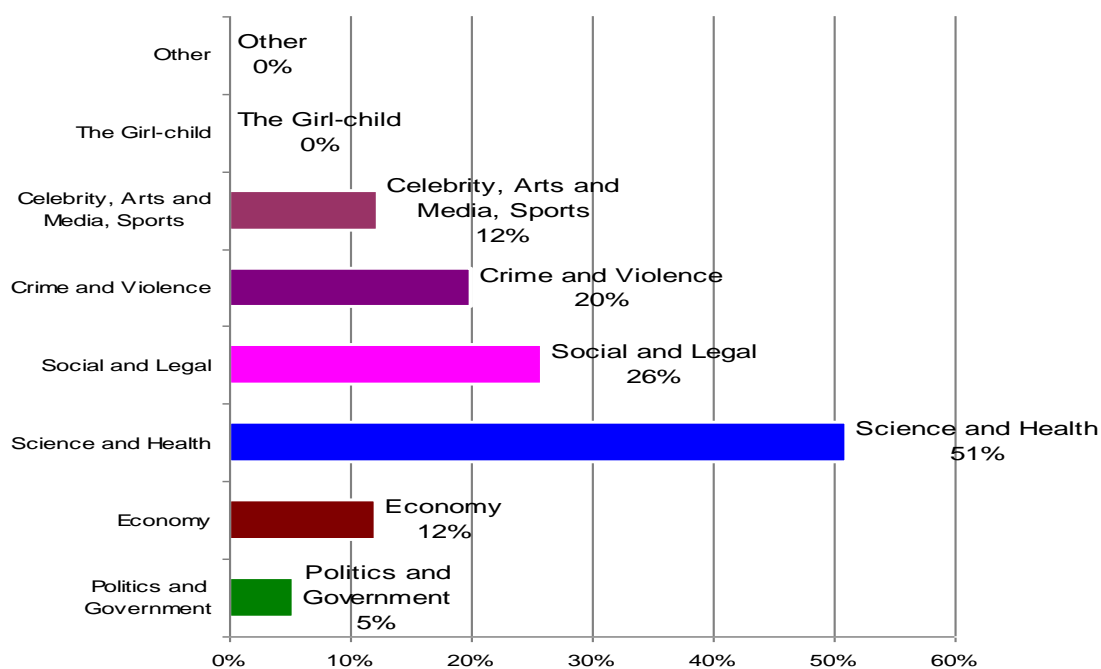
Percentage of female reporters in major topics



THE NEWS

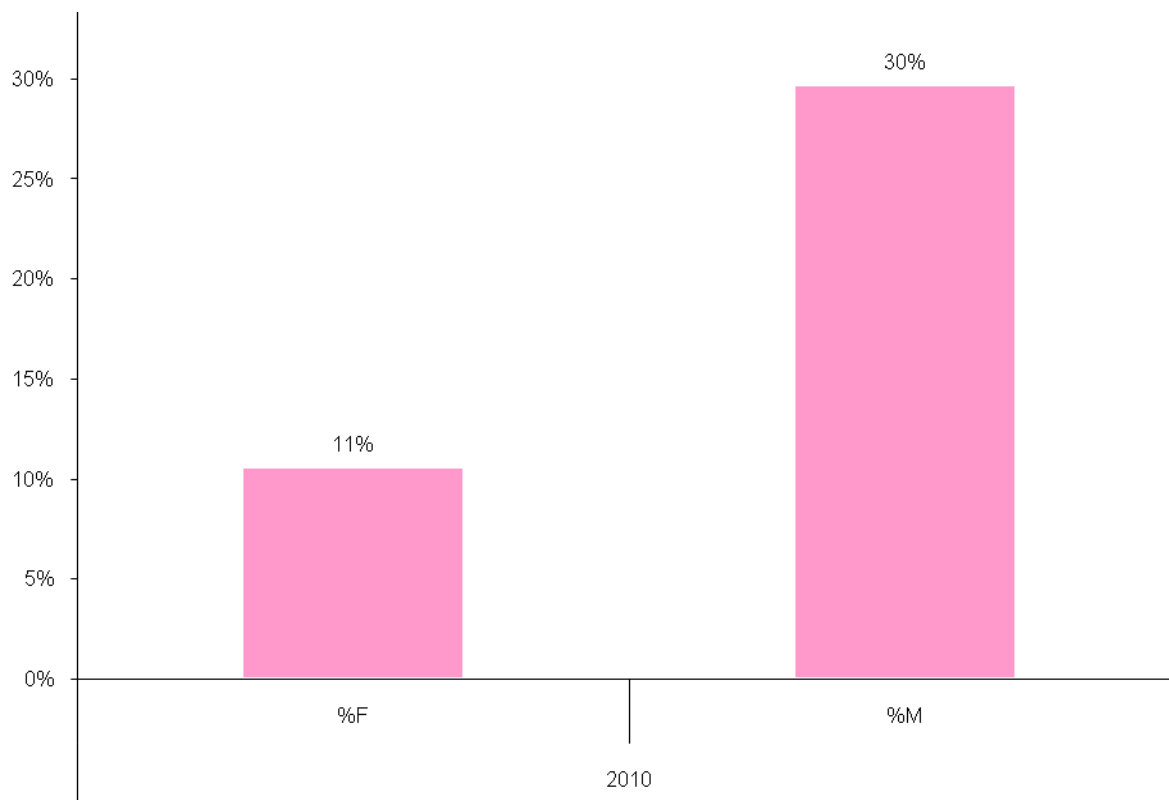
- In total, 222 people were subjects in the news on November 10, 2009 in Kyrgyzstan. 25% of these people were female and 75% were male.
- The presence of female news subjects by story topic was largest in the science and health category with 51% of subjects, followed by social and legal at 26% female subjects. Next was the crime and violence category where women were only 20% of subjects, despite there being more female reporters covering those stories; In the categories economy and celebrity women were 12% of the subjects and only 5% of the subjects in the politics and government category were women.

Presence of women as subjects in the news



- Presence of female and male news subjects in Kyrgyzstan by medium – radio, TV and newspapers: for printed media 81% of subjects were male and 19% female. On radio 15% of the subjects were female and 85% of male. TV featured women only as 25% of subjects with thus 75% of TV news subjects as men.
- Sex misbalance or disparity of news sources by scope of news was more evident: on stories about regional issues, 100% of the subjects were male, for issues of national scope 73% were men and for international scope 85% were men. 0% of subjects in regional stories were women, 27% of subjects of national stories were women, and only 15% of subjects in stories on international affairs were women.
- Results on the analysis of the number of female and male news subjects quoted as sources of information in stories about local, national, and international affairs in newspapers in Kyrgyzstan showed that men tended to be quoted more frequently than women: men were quoted 30% of the time and women 11%.

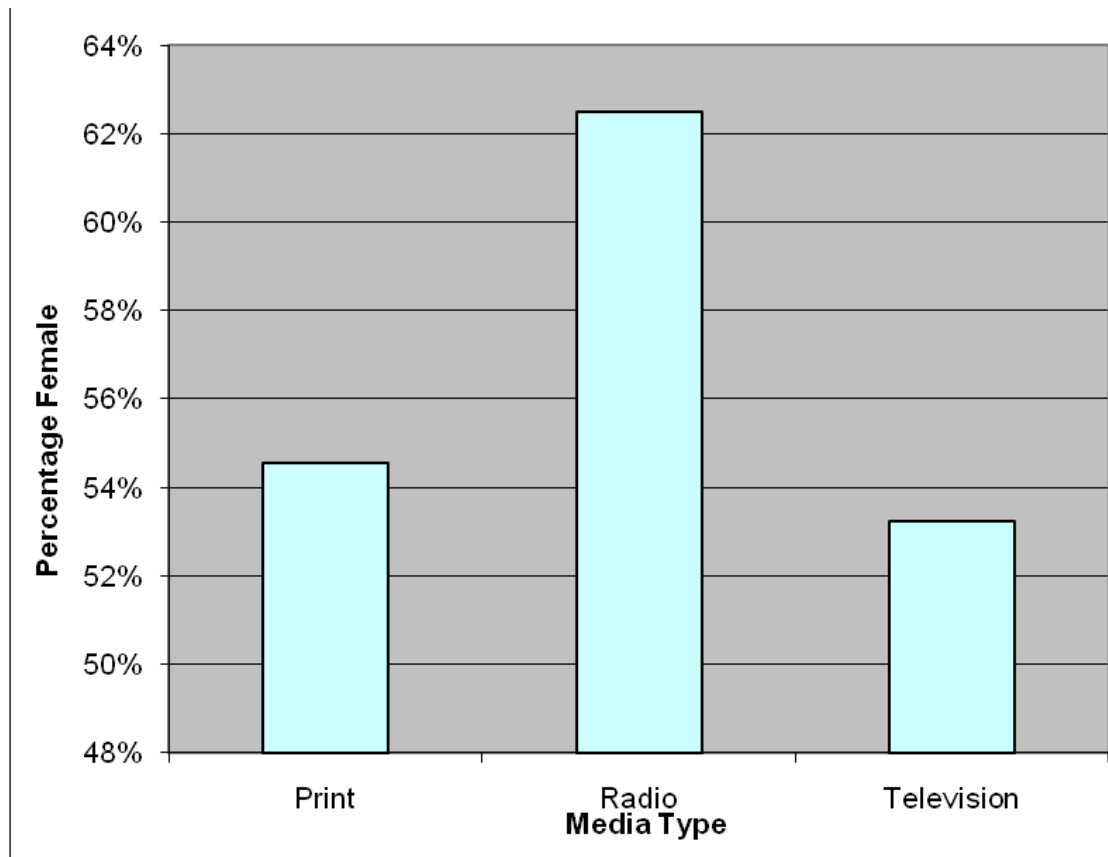
News subjects quoted, by sex



- By story topics, results state that on social topics, media and beauty contests, the ratios of female to males is equal, at 50% and 50% respectively. On story topics related to child care, education, literacy and topics for gender relations, 100% of the subjects were women. For science and other epidemics, women were 67% and 55% of subjects respectively. For serious topics such as the economy, human rights, legal systems, sustainability and even celebrity news, male were 100% of the subjects.
- Occupation of female and male news subjects was also striking as professionals of police, education, economy, business, sportspersons and religious figures were 100% male; government employees were 99% male; government employees 90% male and 10% female; 87% of celebrities were male and only 13% female; tradespersons, drivers and other labourers were 82% male (18% female); media professionals were 74% male (26% female). The only categories where women were the majority were legal advocates (100%); homemaker, parent (100%); retired persons (89%); health or social service professions (77%).
- Expert opinion was overwhelmingly male. Women were not presented as experts in news stories. Monitoring on the function of women and men in news stories showed that men are usually the news subjects – 78% (22% women); spokespersons (99% male and 1% female); experts (74% male). 73% of people recorded as eyewitness or as bystanders who gave a testimony were women. 45% of those who shared popular opinion were women and 27% of those who shared personal experience were women.
- Out of 50 women news subjects 62% of them were portrayed as victims of different types of violence and 38% out of 172 men were recorded as victims of crime.
- Monitoring showed that most news stories did not identify family status, just 9% of women were identified as “daughters” and 4% of men identified as “fathers” and “sons”.
- Images in the news: the number of men’s photographs in newspapers overwhelmed the appearance of women (26%). 37% of the male subjects were photographed compared to only 26% of the women. Considering that male subjects far outnumber female subjects, this higher tendency of men to be photographed makes men much more visible than women.

WHO DELIVERS THE NEWS?

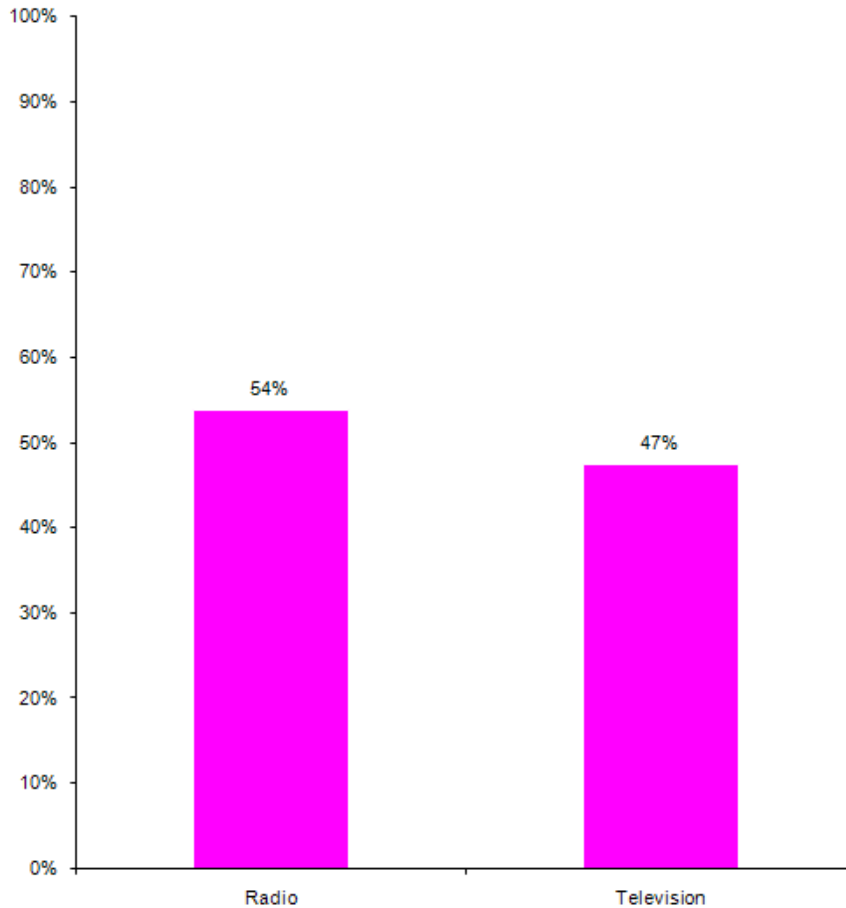
Female announcers and reporters, by medium type:



- Monitoring compared the percentage of news stories presented in broadcasting by women versus the percentage of news stories presented by men. In Kyrgyzstan 56% of stories were presented by women and 44% of stories by men.
- Analyzes of overall presence of women and men as news announcers on radio and television in Kyrgyzstan showed that men dominate the presentation of the news on television (53% of stories announced by men against 47% of women), but in radio women presented 54% of the news over 46% announced by males.

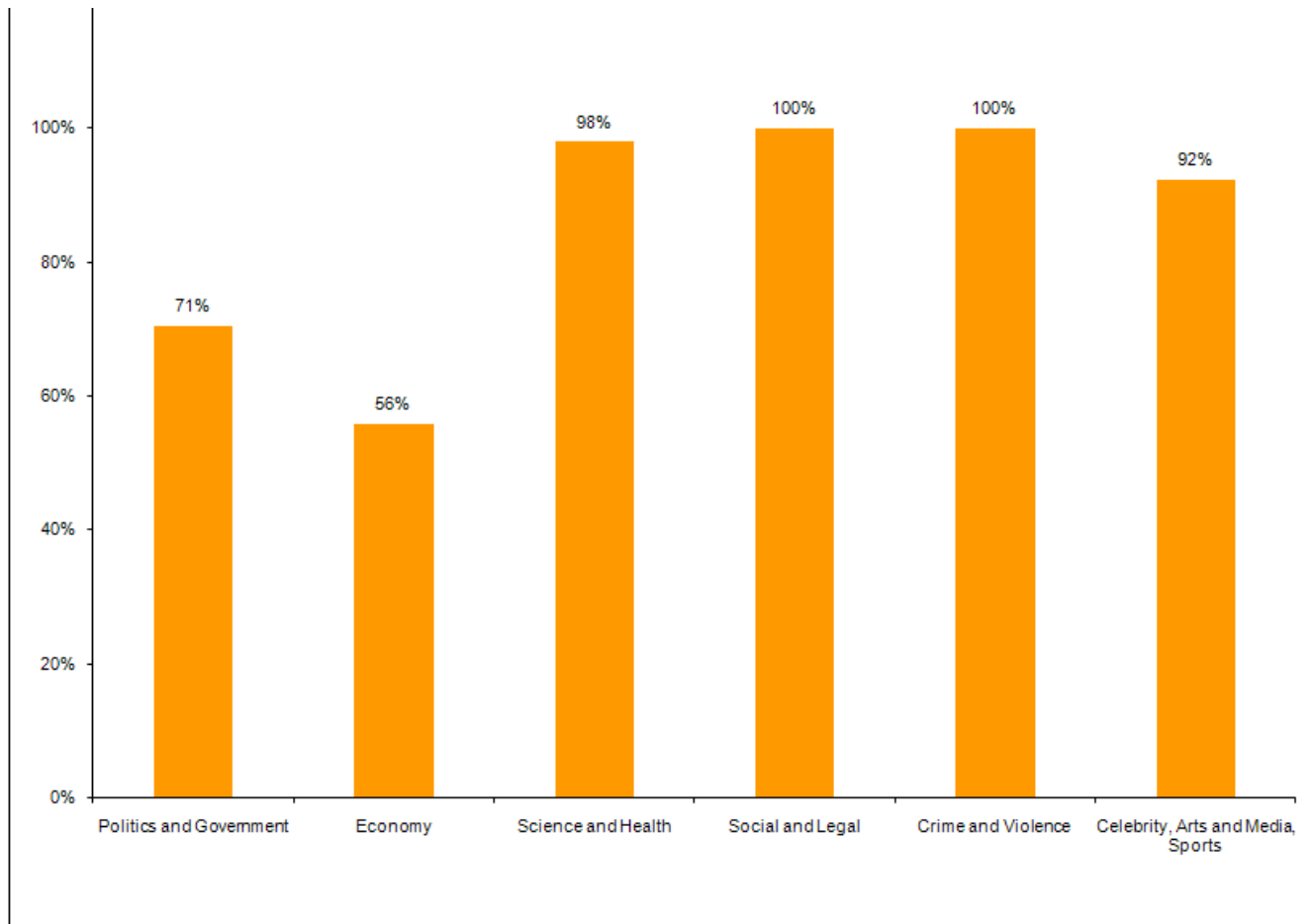
- Female announcers presented a majority of stories on radio (47%), on TV male announcers dominated (53%)

Female announcers on radio and television:



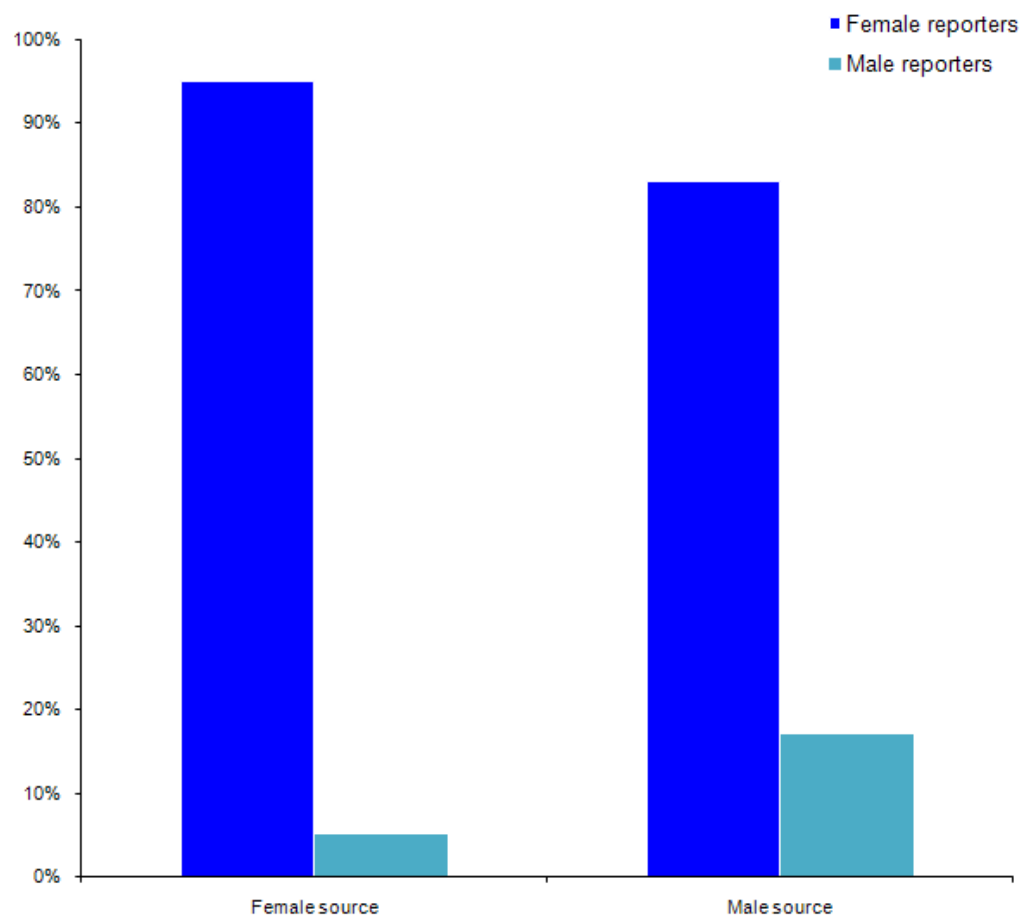
- 58% of domestic stories were announced by women while regional and international stories were mostly presented by men (83% and 74% accordingly).
- The percentage of female and male announcers in major news topics showed two largest topics for female announcement to be science and health (73%) and politics and government (58%). Next was the economy the topic in which women presented 43% of stories, then social and legal (31%) and finally celebrity news (28%).
- Monitoring of presence of women and men as news reporters in Kyrgyzstan by medium – TV, radio and newspapers recorded predominance of women reporters in radio 100%, almost three times more women (76%) than men (24%) on TV and 55% of newspaper stories were reported by women.
- News reporters, who do the majority of the field work are women:78% of domestic and 100% of national events in Kyrgyzstan were reported by women on monitoring day.
- Comparison of the total percentage of the stories reported by women found biggest rates on crime and violence and social and legal stories at 100% each, followed by science and health (98%), then celebrity with 92%, politics and government with 71% and 56% for economy.

Female reporters on major topics



- General analysis showed that more female news sources were found in stories reported by women (94%) but while male reporters also frequently rely on female news sources, they in fact favour male sources over female sources.

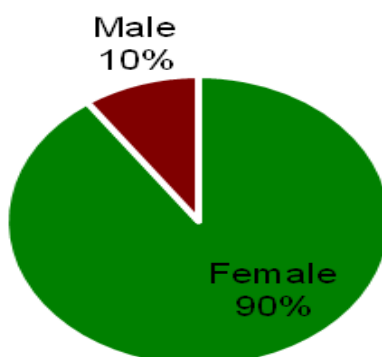
Selection of source by female and male reporters



GENDER AND THE NEWS

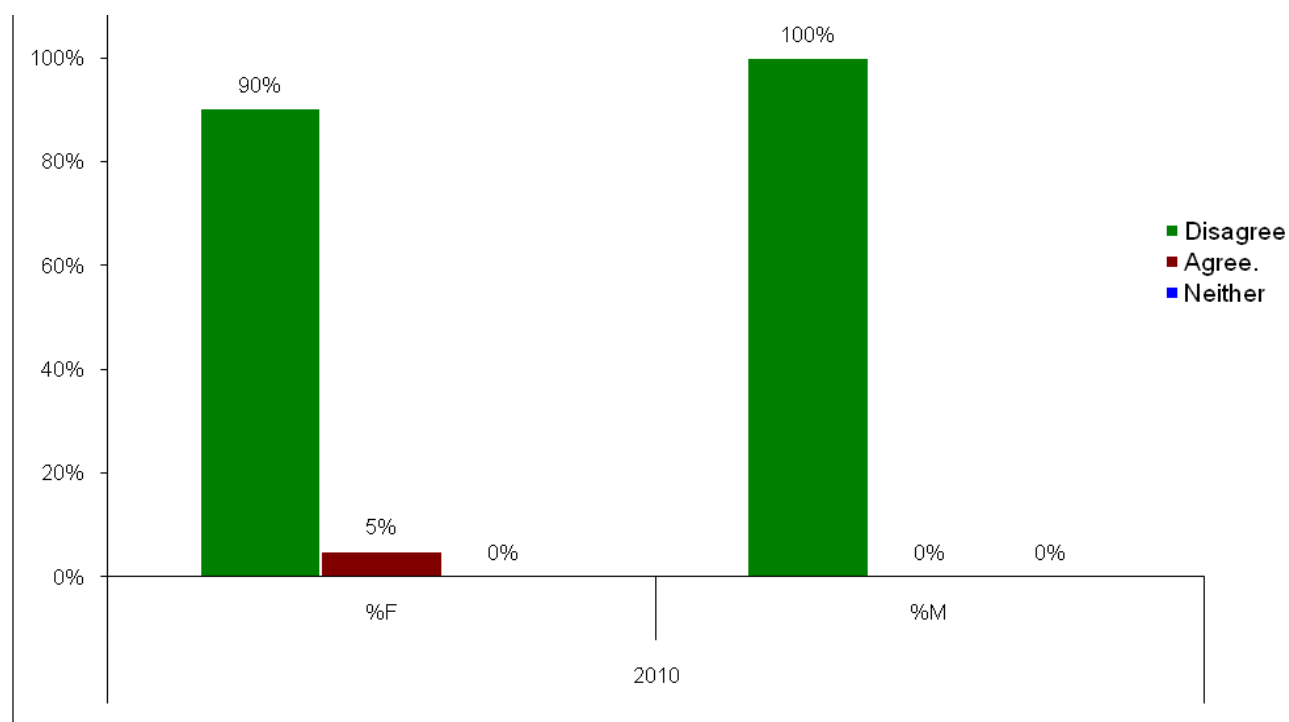
- Monitoring showed that in stories with women as a central focus 90% are reported by women.

Stories with women as a central focus, by sex of reporter



- There were recorded 7 stories where women were the central focus: 1 story on women electoral candidates; 2 stories of beauty contests; on legislation 1 story; celebrity news 2 stories; science and health 1 story. Short comment should be made that newspapers mostly reflected international politics, entertainment and celebrity gossips, radio reported on health and domestic politics, TV news covered international and domestic politics.
- During monitoring day just one news story slightly highlighted gender equality issue among 131 news stories of that day.
- Very few stories challenged stereotypes in Kyrgyzstan, just 1% of the total number of stories. This news story that challenge gender stereotypes was reported by woman, it means that men did not report on stories that challenge or either support gender stereotypes.

Gender stereotypes in the news: Whether stories challenge stereotypes, by sex of reporter.



GENDER AND JOURNALISTIC PRACTICE

- Comments from members of the TV monitoring team were notable: “It is so disappointing. Results showed that news stories and accompanied frames were so gender blatant or at maximum subtle stereotyping. There is a story of a young women scientist, and the only thing audience will remember from this story is that she is already 25, but not married as she dedicated herself to science. Her parents are against this situation as they’d like to have grandchildren. That’s all. It is really depressing.”
- Another comment: “When news is about social insecurity, lack of money or health problems, images of women are used to illustrate the subject. It is striking.”

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

- Women who make up 60% of Kyrgyzstan’s population are barely presented in the news. But we believe that participation of Kyrgyzstan in the GMMP gives opportunities in the next five years to promote the fair and balanced representation of women and men in the news. Steps to be taken:
- Development of monitoring: research training to recruit and train volunteers well in advance of the next monitoring date and for other monitoring activities, so that a widespread and more accurate survey can be completed.
- Awareness raising and trainings for journalists: workshops and round tables for journalists and other staff.
- Advocacy work and continued monitoring on national and regional levels.

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*.

Annex 2. List of Monitors

Olga Djanaeva

Aizhamal Bakashova

Nazira Japakova

Saadat Turdukojeva

Erkaiym Kubatbek kyzy

WACC

WACC
308 Main Street
Toronto
ON M4C 4X7
Canada

Tel: +1 416 691 1999
Fax: +1 416 691 1997
Email: info@waccglobal.org
Web: www.waccglobal.org,
www.whomakesthenews.org



Rural Women's Association "Alga"
35 Aidarbekov street
Jerkazar village, Ysyk-Ata raion
Chui valley, 722177
Kyrgyzstan

Tel: +996 312 61 01 36
Fax: +996 312 61 00 22
E-mail: alga@infotel.kg; ngoalga@gmail.com