Egypt

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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Appropriate Communication Development (ACT)

Coptic Evangelical Organization Techniques for Social Services (CEOSS)
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.’

- 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.

- 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

While Egypt was participating in the GMMP in 2000, the amendment of Personal Status Law was at the center of debate on state TV and parliament. This legislation was successfully past and grants women additional rights, including less complex procedures to obtain court-decree divorce and financial obligations from the spouse. In recent years, much of the public agenda regarding gender rights has been occupied by the issue of sexual harassment. In 2008, the first sexual harassment case in Egypt was heard and resulted in a three-year prison sentence for the male perpetrator. That same year, a study by the Egyptian Centre for Women’s Rights (ECWR) found 83% of Egyptian women and 98% of foreign women had been sexually harassed, usually on the street or public transport. In addition, the

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
issue of banning female judges surfaced in early February, only to be overturned by the country’s Constitutional Court in March. Year 2010 is particularly important for the public agenda in Egypt, since in addition to the forthcoming elections to the Shura Council and the parliamentary elections, there is draft legislation to be discussed in parliament regarding gender equality, sexual harassment included. Domestic law in Egypt guarantees gender equality in article 40 of the Constitution which states that citizens ‘are equal in front of the law and equal in rights and duties. There shall be no discrimination between them based on gender, origin, language or belief’. In order to reflect this egalitarian spirit, gender-sensitive media must represent these and other challenges facing Egypt.

- 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.

- Act took part in this project as a partner of WACC since many years, and coordinator of the Arab Network for monitoring and changing the image of men and women in media. ACT has a local monitoring unit, the report was prepared by ACT and CEOSS, also partners of WACC, and both organisations are interested in monitoring and work on gender issues. Lara Worcester, a Canadian graduate student of the Gender Studies program at AUC, Egypt took part in this project as a volunteer. Media representations today continue to help maintain and justify inequality between men and women. Being critical of national and international news is one of the best ways to combat the marginalization of women’s stories, and to promote a better understanding of the world in which we live.

Executive Summary

- In Egypt, women are significantly underrepresented in the news. Only 27% of news subjects- the people who are interviewed, or who the news is about- are female.

- Women’s points of views are underrepresented in topics that make up the majority of national news. Male subjects dominate Social/legal stories (80%), the Economy (75%), Celebrity/arts/media/sports (71%) and Politics/government affairs (67%). There is not one major news topic in which women are represented more than men.

- As authorities or experts, women barely feature in news stories. 80% of spokespersons are male with only 20% female. No female subjects function as experts. News information sources are also overwhelmingly male. Only 30% of national news features female sources.

- All news stories in Egypt with women as a central focus are reported by female reporters. Most of these stories tended to be about celebrities and beauty contests.

- While women are dramatically underrepresented as news subjects, the overall number of women reporters and announcers are almost equal to men or greater. For example, 54% of television news anchors were female and 46% were male.

- Stories that make-up the bulk of the news agenda tend to reinforce gender stereotypes. Two topics which greatly contribute to the reinforcement of gender stereotypes are the Economy (60%) and Social/legal stories (50%). 39% of all news stories actually challenged stereotypes. This includes news topics such as Science/health (67%) and Politics/government (60%).

- News on gender inequality is extremely low. Only 4% of stories highlight equality issues. These stories concentrate in areas such as political and economic participation, scientific research and funding, and celebrity/entertainment news. News about the girl-child is non-existent.
**A DAY IN THE NEWS IN EGYPT**

- **10 November 2009.** The main story that dominated most broadcasts and newspapers was the death of Marwa El-Sherbini, an Egyptian woman who was stabbed 18 times by a German who was arrested in Dresden for suspected murder. Her husband, Elwi Okaz, was in a critical condition in the hospital after being accidentally shot by a security guard as he tried to save his wife. The suspected motive was that El-Sherbini had sued her killer after he called her a “terrorist” because of her headscarf. Medics were unable to save El-Sherbini who was three months pregnant with her second child.

**THE CONTEXT**

- **Country background:** President Nasser oversaw the nationalization of the media in 1961. Strict government censorship and licensing laws meant the state controlled what people read and watched and private media investment was impossible. The advent of pan-Arab satellite TV channels such as al-Jazeera in the 1990s provided Egyptians with high-budget programming and more open talk shows on social and political issues. This subsequently produced changes in the Egyptian media landscape. More recently, there has been a surge in the number of privately owned outlets, and a consequent dismantling of many decades of state control. Television remains the most popular medium in Egypt and audience numbers are increasing rapidly. Nearly one-third of Egyptians also listen to the radio on a daily basis, with news and religious programming particularly popular.

The domestic state broadcaster ERTU offers two national terrestrial channels, ERTU 1 and ERTU 2. It also provides news and current affairs output for the Egyptian Satellite Channel, ESC 1, and Nile TV International. Nile Thematic TV was established in 1998 in an attempt to modernise the image of state television and win back audiences lost to the pan-Arab channels. The company has its own management, independent of Channel 1 and 2, but remains under the control of ERTU. Its 12 channels focus on arts and culture, news and current affairs, music, sports and children’s programming.

The ERTU still controls the majority of Egypt’s radio stations, but listening figures have dropped dramatically owing to the spread of television in general and the wide availability of satellite television in particular. Egyptians rely on state radio for recitations from the Koran. State radio is also the main provider of news programmes, presenting the government’s position on local and world affairs. The main entertainment and news stations include Arab Republic of Egypt General Service, Voice of the Arabs, Holy Koran Service and Greater Cairo Radio. The government has recently allowed two private stations to broadcast on FM, Nijoom FM, which broadcasts Arabic songs, and Nile FM, which airs songs in English. Both appeal strongly to younger age groups, offering up-to-date music and discussions on topics of interest, but no news.

The number of newspapers in Egypt has soared to more than 500, most of which are independent. The state-owned press operates on a system of self-censorship, but the sharp rise in the number of private and independent titles means the "red lines" observed by press sources have largely disappeared. The government has recently replaced the top editors of its biggest newspapers. Media observers predict this will lead to stronger criticism of the opposition. Many believe the appointees will try their utmost to sway the presidential election on 7 September 2011 in favour of the incumbent, Hosni Mubarak. In the run-up to polling day, opposition newspapers such as Al Wafd have been highlighting demonstrations against Mr Mubarak and echoing condemnations of his 27-year hold on power. In contrast, state-linked papers such as El Ahram, Al Akhbar and Al Jumhuriyah have largely ignored or trivialised the opposition.

- **Media monitored:** The media selected for analysis for the GMMP in Egypt included six newspapers, two government-owned TV channels and two government-owned radio stations (Radio Misr and Soot el Arab). Three of the six selected newspapers are privately owned, which include Soot el Omma, El Youm el Sabea and El Shorouq. The government controlled newspapers, El Messa and El Ahram, are the most widely distributed newspapers in the country. Al Wafd, a partisan paper, was selected because it is controlled by one of the oldest opposition parties in Egypt. Nile News television is broadcast nationwide and CH 5 Alexandria focuses on local news in the Delta region.

- **The monitors:** A total number if 16 participants representing five organizations monitored 26 news stories with 7 female news subjects and 19 males news subjects identified.
**TOPICS IN THE NEWS**

- **Topics in the news**: Social/legal topics had the highest rate of televised news on monitoring day in Egypt at 26%. Politics/government topics made the news at 22%, followed by the Economy (17%), Science/health (13%), Celebrity/arts/media/sports (13%) and Crime/violence (4%). There was no representation of topics related to the Girl-child.

- Female reporters present the majority of entertainment news in Egypt. 75% of entertainment news were reported by females. More than half of the news related to Science/health (67%) and Social/legal affairs (60%) were reported by females. Female reporters presented less than half of stories related to Politics/government (40%) and the Economy (33%). No female reporters were represented in news related to Crime/violence.

**THE NEWS**

- **Overall presence of women and men in the news in Egypt as news subjects, reporters and presenters**: The majority of news subjects were male (75%) and there were no news topics in which women were represented more than men.

- **Presence of female and male news subjects in your country by medium – radio, TV and newspapers**: No information on radio broadcasting is available. 75% of news subjects on television were male. In print news, 50% of the news subjects were either male or female.

- **News Sources**: In local affairs, only 14% of the news was quoted as coming from a female source in comparison to 86% from a male source. At the national level, 30% of the news sources were female with 70% male. No international affairs were recorded.

- The greatest overall percentage of women as new subjects reaches only 50% for Science/health stories. This means that there are no news topics in which women are represented more than men. Male subjects make up the majority of Social/legal stories (80%), Economy (75%), Celebrity/arts/media/sports (71%) and Politics/government (67%).

- **Who are the newsmakers?** The position/occupation of female news subjects (27% of the total national news content) comprised one government official, one journalist, one science/technology professional, one unemployed and two celebrities. The position/occupation of male news subjects (a total of 73%) comprised of 13 government official, four public servants and two lawyers.

- **Function of female and male news subjects**: Out of the total number of news stories about an individual, 63% of those stories were about a man. 37% of news stories were about a woman. 80% of the spokespersons were male with only 20% female. There was one male subject represented as an expert. No female subjects represented this function.

- **Constructing ‘victims’ in the news**: One female was portrayed as a victim of discrimination based on religion and gender. There were no representations of males as victims.

- **Identity and family status in the news**: None of the news subjects where identified by family status.

- **Images in the news**: 67% of female news subjects appeared in newspaper photographs. Only 20% of male news subjects were photographed.

**WHO DELIVERS THE NEWS?**

- **Overall Presenters**: The overall number of news presenters was 50% either male or female.

- **Age of presenters and reporters**: The age of female television news presenters and reporters are all listed under “Do not know”.
Announcers: There is no data on Egypt’s radio announcers. Across all news stories on television, 54% of announcers were female and 46% were male.

83% of the local news represented male announcers and only 17% represented female announcers. The opposite is true for national news; 17% of news announcers were male and 83% were female.

Female announcers presented the majority of news topics related to Science/health (100%), Politics/government (67%), and Celebrity/arts/media/sports (67%). Male announcers presented the majority of news topics related to Social/legal affairs (100%) and the Economy (67%).

Reporters. There was one female newspaper reporter and one female television reporter. Print news was the only medium in which one male reporter was present. No information is available for radio broadcasts.

There was no international news recorded. Both local and national news was presented by female and male reporters.

From the total number of female reporters, one delivered news related to the Economy and one delivered news related to entertainment. News about the Economy was delivered by one male reporter.

Both female and male news sources (50%) were found in stories reported by women in Egypt.

GENDER AND THE NEWS

Sex of reporters in stories with women as a central focus: All stories specifically focused women were reported by female reporters.

Most stories with women as a central focus in Egypt tended to included celebrity news (n=3) and beauty contests (n=2). Other stories with women as a central focus, but which had a low count (n=1) included topics of changing gender relations, the judicial system, the arts, and other domestic politics/government.

Stories that highlight issues of gender equality or inequality issues: Stories that address gender (in)equality are virtually non-existent. 0% of the 26 news stories observed highlighted equality issues.

Top 12 stories sorted in which issue were raised about gender (in)equality by topic. Sorted data in which issues were not raised is unavailable.
- **Challenging or reinforcing stereotypes?** 46% of all news stories reinforced gender stereotypes. Examples of this include representations of female politicians and legal attorneys as irrational and impulsive, or mothers as selfless and asexual. Topic such as the Economy (60%) and Social/legal (50%) were most likely to support stereotypes. 39% of stories challenged stereotypes. This included news topics such as Science/health (67%) and Politics/government (60%). 50% of Celebrity news challenged or reinforced stereotypes. 15% neither challenged nor reinforced them.

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<th>Topic</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
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<td>40%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Economy</td>
<td></td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Science and Health</td>
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<td>33%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social and Legal</td>
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<td>50%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Crime and Violence</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>46%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>15%</td>
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- 50% of news stories that challenged gender stereotypes were reported by women. 50% of stories that supported stereotypes were also reported by women.

**SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS**

This report shows that, in Egypt, women are significantly underrepresented in the news. Only 27% of news subjects- the people who are interviewed, or who the news is about- are female. Women’s points of view are underrepresented in topics that make up the majority of national news in Egypt. There is not one major news topic in which women are represented more than men.

The greatest overall percentage of women as new subjects reaches only 50% for Science/health stories. Male subjects represent the majority of Social/legal stories (80%), Economy (75%), Celebrity/entertainment (71%) and Politics/government stories (67%).

As authority or experts, women barely feature in news stories. 80% of spokespersons were male with only 20% female. There was one male subject represented as an expert. No female subjects represented this function. News informational sources are also overwhelmingly male. Only 30% of national news quoted a female source.

Females are much more likely than males to appear in photographs. 67% of female news subjects appeared in newspaper photographs as opposed to only 20% of male news subjects.

63% of stories that specifically focused on an individual were about a male. Only 37% of these news stories were about a female.

While women are underrepresented as news subjects, the overall number of women reporters and announcers is almost equal to men. 50% of news presenters are either male or female. In television, there are more female news announcers (54%) then there are male (46%).

All news stories with women as a central focus are reported by female reporters. Most stories with women as a central focus in Egypt tend to included celebrity news (n=3) and beauty contests (n=2). Stories that make-up the bulk of the news agenda tend to reinforce gender stereotypes. Two topics which greatly contribute to the reinforcement of gender stereotypes are the Economy (60%) and Social/legal stories (50%). 39% of all news stories actually challenged stereotypes. This included news topics such as Science/health (67%) and Politics/government (60%).
News on gender (in)equality is virtually non-existent. Only 4% of stories highlight equality issues. These stories concentrate in areas such as political and economic participation, scientific research and funding, and celebrity/entertainment news. News about the girl-child were non-existent.

**THE NEXT FIVE YEARS**

- Work on developing media methodology and media presentation, change the negativity of Egyptian media and reluctance to feature women’s issue in order to eliminate the role of media in inculcating discrimination between men and women, whether explicitly or implicitly.
- Professional difficulties that male and female journalists encounter need to be removed in dealing freely and objectively with women’s issues and topics, and there should not be any restrictions in discussing an issue that concerns women under the pretext that it is against Sharia or is out of the norm.
- Fill the knowledge gap of male and female journalists regarding national and international legislations concerning women’s issues and the mechanisms related, as well as providing the persons responsible for communication with information sources on women’s rights; information holds a considerable importance in the area of human rights, thus women’s rights, the profession of persons responsible for communication is in total research, sending out and exchanging information.
- Organise training courses for male and female journalists as one of the main categories that need to be removed in dealing freely and objectively with women’s issues and topics, and there should not be any restrictions in discussing an issue that concerns women under the pretext that it is against Sharia or is out of the norm.
- Encourage local and regional seminars on media and women’s rights in order to sketch an effective role for mass media in disseminating and advocating the culture of women’s right, encourage media persons to participate effectively in the seminars and push towards setting a code of media professional ethics regarding featuring women’s issues and guarantee a minimum of media tackling and presentation of these rights, through the different reporting means, such as reportages, interviews, commentaries and analytical articles.
- Encourage the formation of democratic press and mass media, that aim to support human rights’ issues and women’s rights, as well as monitor violations against journalists and media persons and protect their independent rights, among which are the right to publish, to express and to inform.
- Encourage feminist organisations and human rights organisations to create coalitions with the task of publishing an annual report on the image of men and women in the different media, preparing and implementing campaign against negative and stereotypical images of women, encourage and press the continuation of media that highlight positive images.
- Organise training courses for male and female journalists as one of the main categories that need to be removed in dealing freely and objectively with women’s issues and topics, and there should not be any restrictions in discussing an issue that concerns women under the pretext that it is against Sharia or is out of the norm.
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- Encourage the creation of media monitoring units that work on monitoring the image of men and women in Egyptian media and press, with all their tendencies and orientations, send out results to persons in charge of communication and media persons in the different media, to decision-makers, to organisations that advocate women’s rights, to human rights organisations, to mass communication faculties and institutes, to the journalists’ syndicate and to all parties concerned with women’s issues, in order to disseminate the culture of media monitoring, exposure of violations and adoption negative attitudes and fake awareness that media is undertaking, and to form lobbies against these violations.

- Designate annual awards to be given to various organisations for best reportage, topics, photographs, journalistic feature of women’s issues and women’s rights, as well as those that present the actual reality in which women live, in an objective and anti-stereotypical manner.

- Create an independent media centre of expertise to qualify and train media cadres, especially the press, in refusing forms of stereotyping and negative and non-objective images of women, and to develop an alternative discourse to be inculcated in mass media, as well as ways to run press campaigns to influence media policy makers in order to adopt the discourse and develop a fair and just media message to women.

- Publish the results of studies and researches in newspapers and magazines, hold press conferences and interviews to discuss the results and recommendations of the studies.

- Start a national dialogue on the alternative image of men and women that should be adopted by media and identify through the dialogue the different methods and mechanisms to disseminate it.

- Establish a gender-sensitive media code of practice

- Work in collaboration with the national, regional and international media associations as well as media training institutions to develop and train a sensitization funding from media monitoring researches such as GMMP to address the gap in the presentation of women in the news
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

Azza Kamel (ACT) trained the monitors in how to monitor media

Monitors:

1) ACT – Mona Afifi – Salma Alaa
2) Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Services – Mrs. Amany Latif and Mrs. Heba Youssry
3) Egyptian Foundation For Family Development - Islam Tarek - Reda Abdel Kader
4) Council of Services and Development (CSD) - Rev. Nageh Fawzy
5) Development Institutionalization Support Center (DISC) – Mr. Kamal Sedra, Mr. Nader Edwar – Ms. Nathalie Yehya – Mr. Moheb Zaki
6) Ibrahimia Media Center – Mr. Youssef Mansour and Demiana Wadid
7) Helwan Association for Community Development (Bashayer) – Thana’ Abdul Latif - Andira Gad, Faten Ibrahim