The NWMI

Gnomes

Those little (and not so little) creatures that magically get stuff done
The NWMI epitomises the ‘nirgun’ philosophy of the bhakti saints—a palpable nirbhay (fearless) presence without (nir) material form (gun)

- No office/Secretariat, 550 members across India
- No funding, members pool in resources and funds are raised for specific purposes
- No formal hierarchies or office-bearers
- Coordinators and Working Council help reach decisions by consensus
- No paid staff, all work is voluntary
So, here’s who holds up the backend at NWMI
Just kidding !
Here’s who actually does!
Let’s see who these women are behind their masks and capes!
The e-Group: Our lifeline

• The Yahoo group was set up a few years after the NWMI came into existence in 2002, during the days of torturous dial-up (mostly VSNL) connections

• In 2006, the e-group was unilaterally deleted by a moderator who felt that some members had violated confidentiality

• But NWMI stalwarts came to the rescue and rebuilt the address list and we were up and running again. And we made sure we always have two moderators!

• Moderators through the years: Ananya Chakraborti; Rajashri Dasgupta; C. Vanaja, Varsha Torgalkar, Laxmi Murthy

• The Google Group was created by C.Vanaja, the transition was led by Ragamalika Karthikeyan

• The new Google Group has 541 members

• To add new members contact: nwmimembership2020@gmail.com
Yahoo/Google group Moderators
Ananya, Rajashri, Vanaja, Varsha, Laxmi
The Telegram Group

• Set up by Neha Dixit
• Admin are Laxmi, Vanaja, Sandhya Srinivasan and Rohini Mohan
• It has only 174 members, though we shifted from the vibrant and talkative WhatsApp group in 2018 because we had reached the limit of 250 members.
• Where are the rest of the members?
• And the noisy discussion? We suspect the local WhatsApp groups are where opinionated and raucous debate is happening!
Back in the day, the masthead was designed pro bono for the NWMI by cartoonist, illustrator and writer Manjula Padmanabhan.

Upon request, Manjula also came up with a #MeToo graphic in 2018. (Go find it on the website!)
Speaking of which...

How many of you have checked out the brand new, revamped website at which a few weary gnomes have been slogging away for the past couple of years?

We need volunteers!!

Please contact editors@nwmindia.org
The website has been nurtured by:

Anjali Mathur, Sandhya Srinivasan, Ammu Joseph, Mahithi Pillay and Laxmi Murthy.

Leena Reghunath has just joined the team. Turns out she's a grammar Nazi too! Heil!

Meera K., Padma Prakash and Pushpa Achanta were involved at various points
Spreading the good word on social media

- Tanya Thomas
- Mahithi Pillay
- Rohini Mohan
- Ashlin Mathew
- Jagriti Chandra
Spreading the good word on Social Media

- The NWMI FB Page was set up by Neha Dixit
- Ammu Joseph tries valiantly to update it
- Sameera Khan is our Instawoman
Activities present and past

• Now that you’ve got a glimpse of the backend and the daily work that goes into it, the following slides will give members an idea of ongoing activities of the NWMI.

• You’ll also get an idea of some of our past work: statements, research, reports, campaigns and events.
Responding to the Covid crisis: The Jobs Initiative

- The NWMI launched an initiative in mid-April 2020 to reach out and provide support to media colleagues facing job and income insecurity and loss.

- Helpline: two network members opening their direct message options (DMs) to enable affected journalists to get in touch.

- Sharing of resources for mental health, legal help.

- In May 2020, a survey was conducted to gather data on the impact of the pandemic on the financial security of journalists.
The Jobs Team:

Raksha Kumar, Supriya Unni Nair, Jagriti Chandra, Durga Nandini
Ayswarya Murthy, Leena Reghunath, Geeta Seshu, Ammu Joseph.

A big thanks to Jisha Elizabeth and her husband John for generously offering to design the Webinar posters
Letdown in Lockdown:
NWMI Webinar Series, 2020

A Webinar series focusing on how to cope with the pandemic, the lockdown and severe impact on media jobs; journalists’ rights; how to make a good pitch, how to make the best of freelancing, and a series on data journalism.

Resource persons from within the NWMI and outside.
The Global Media Monitoring Project

• The GMMP is the largest global monitoring project on gender in the media.
• Since 2010, the NWMI has been associated with its five-yearly monitoring, anchored by Ammu Joseph
• Sameera Khan and Ammu Joseph edited the first-ever India country report in 2010.
• Padmaja Shaw is currently coordinating GMMP 2020 with the help of NWMI volunteers.
NWMI-Population First-UNFPA Study: Missing Gender Perspectives in Covid-19 Reportage in India

Analysis of Print Media (Mar-Sept 2020)
12 publications in 7 languages and everyone involved from Guwahati to Thrissur is an NWMer!!

The team at work: Sameera Khan and Sweta Singh (Co-ordinators)
Prachi Pinglay; Menaka Rao; Neeta Kolhatkar; Prachi Bari; Uttara Gangopadhyay; Sudarshana Chakraborty; Vidhya CK; Sruthi AS; Chitra Ahanthem; Syeda Nazneen Hassan; Parul Sharma; Sumita Jaiswal
The NWMI Fellowship: Launched in 2017

- Aims to support deserving women journalists as an act of professional solidarity. The fellowship is entirely based on voluntary contributions of money, material and other resources from NWMI members.
- Co-ordinated by Laxmi Murthy and Vasanthi Hariprakash
- Spontaneous, generous and committed contributions from more than 25 NWMI members have sustained these fellowships.
Our Amazing NWMI Fellows!

Jayanti Buruda  
*Odisha*

Ambika Raja  
*Kerala*

Marouf Gazi  
*Kashmir*

Kavitha Katta  
*Telangana*
The NWMI went online in 2020, at the national and local level.
Through the year we stood up for journalists’ rights, gender sensitive media portrayal and ethics.
Standing up for Journalists’ Rights

JULY 9, 2020
PRESS RIGHTS DAY

#PressRightsDay
#ResistRetrenchments
#ProtestJobLosses
#ProtestWageCuts

Journalists Fight Job Losses
Oppose Retrenchments, Layoffs And Wage Cuts!
Independent Journalism Campaign

• An NWMI initiative led by Neha Dixit, with inputs from several members including Shubhada Chandrachud, Raksha Kumar, Varsha Torgalkar, Priyanka Borpujari, Priyanka Dubey, Kavitha Muralidharan, Rohini Mohan.

• Creating an online database of more than 100 media outlets which commission independent journalists, with contacts of editors, standard rates and tips on how to pitch stories.

• A Charter for Independent Journalists, discussed at NWMI’s National Meet in Ahmedabad in 2014, was adopted at the Hyderabad Meet in November 2016.
Creating Safe Spaces: Prevention and redressal of Sexual Harassment in Media Houses in India

• Study by NWMI and Gender at Work in 2018, report released on March 8, 2020

• Laxmi Murthy, Ragamalika Karthikeyan and Ammu Joseph from NWMI conducted the study and wrote the report.
News Behind the Barbed Wire:
Kashmir’s Information Blockade

• A month after the abrogation of Article 370 the continuing shutdown of communication in the Kashmir valley was throttling the independent media.

• Laxmi Murthy and Geeta Seshu, a two-member team from the NWMI and the Free Speech Collective (FSC), spent five days in the Valley between August 30 and September 3, 2019 to determine the impact of the severe crackdown on communication on the media in Kashmir and brought out a report.
Panels or Manels?
Desperately seeking women in Indian TV news debates

- Monitored TV news channels for women’s representation, for one month, covering 28 channels in 12 languages. The report, ‘Study on the Representation of Women in Indian TV News Channels’ was released on February 1, 2019.

- Study co-ordinated by Sonal Kellogg with a team of 11 NWMI volunteers: Kamayani Bali Mahabal; Rina Mukherji; Manjira Majumdar; Pushpa Achanta; Varsha Torgalkar; Anita Cheria; Sweta Singh; Parvin Sultana; Elisa Patnaik; Kavitha Muralidharan
How do decisions get made in the NWMI?

Decision-making has been transparent and largely consensus-based, following extensive deliberation. In 2011 a ‘Working Council’ to expedite decision-making, especially over matters that required a quick response, such as issuing statements and sending letters on behalf of the network.

The Working Council consists of co-ordinators representing each of the local chapters, and a few founder members a “council of elders” as it were (Ammu Joseph, Kalpana Sharma, Laxmi Murthy, Rajashri Dasgupta and Sandhya Taksale)

And who are the Coordinators? Gotta look up the website, folks! All will be revealed!
Member participation in the NWMI

• All activities in the NWMI depend on volunteers, and a couple of people co-ordinating the task.

• Any member outraged over an issue related to gender, media and ethics can take the initiative to circulate a draft for discussion and finalise an NWMI statement based on inputs.

• Members initiate and co-ordinate research, studies, webinars as the NWMI and/or in collaboration with other organisations.

• During national meetings, local groups come together as if by magic, and conjure up the resources, put together panels, and make arrangements for around a 100-150 members from all over the country to attend. National meetings have taken place in Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, Delhi, Hyderabad, Imphal, Kolkata, Kozhikode, Mumbai and Pune.
The gnomes behind the NWMI Year-end Virtual Event, Dec 19, 2020

Rohini Mohan, Vasanthi Hariprakash, Supriya Unni Nair, Leena Reghunath, Ammu Joseph, Laxmi Murthy, Geeta Seshu, Jagriti Chandra, Sameera Khan, Durga Nandini
Thank You!!

Forest Gnome aka Laxmi Murthy
December 19, 2020