

**Workshop on
Democratic Accountability in the Digital Age
– From Challenges for Governability to a Roadmap for Governance**

**14th to 15th November 2016, New Delhi
United Service Institution of India
Seminar Room I**

Agenda

Background

IT for Change, along with Centre for Internet and Society (CIS), Digital Empowerment Foundation (DEF), *Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan* (MKSS) and National Campaign for People's Right to Information (NCPRI), is organizing a two day workshop on 'Democratic Accountability in the Digital Age'. The workshop will focus on evolving a comprehensive policy approach to data based governance and digital democracy, grounded in a rights and social justice framework.

The workshop aims to:

- Discuss the institutional norms, rules and practices appropriate to the rise of 'governance by networks' and 'rule by data' that can guarantee democratic accountability and citizen participation.
- Articulate the steps to claim the civic-public value of digital technologies so that data and the new possibilities for networking are harnessed for a vibrant grassroots democracy.

We hope the workshop can create a civil society coalition that can build effective strategies for legal and policy reform to further participatory democracy in the digital age. On the first day, the workshop will set the context through knowledge sharing and thematic presentations and discussions. On the second day, we aim to concretize strategies for collective action to further democratic accountability in the digital age.

Agenda	
14^h November	Day 1
9.00 AM to 9.30 AM	Registration
9.30 AM to 10.30 AM	<p>Introduction</p> <p>(a) Welcome and Introduction to Workshop from the organizers. (b) Participants introduce themselves.</p>
10.30 AM to 10.50 AM	Tea Break
10.50 AM to 12.20 PM	<p>Session 1. Democracy in <i>Digital India</i>: What is at stake? Format: Moderated discussion amongst panelists, followed by open discussion</p> <p>Indian democracy is witnessing a paradigmatic shift, characterized by the rapid digitalization & datafication of welfare systems and citizen-engagement mechanisms. For example: the move towards JAM-enabled direct cash transfers in welfare systems, the digitalization of last-mile service delivery through the establishment of a country-wide network of common service centres, and the increasing push for using computational power to respond to citizen needs and priorities in policy-development and programming.</p> <p>From MIS-based systems for tracking grievances to big data analysis of services uptake and citizen-voice on online platforms, these transitions are fueled by a new governance culture that leverages digital technologies for state-citizen interaction. This panel will critically examine the impacts of this transition to a digitalized, data-based governance paradigm, from the standpoint of democratic accountability and citizen-rights. Panelists will talk about key issues/concerns and priority actions at this juncture so that the digital opportunity in governance proceeds from the goals of equity and social justice.</p> <p>Moderated discussion for about 40 minutes, followed by an input from the discussant for 10 minutes and open discussion for 40 minutes</p> <p>Speakers Nikhil Dey, <i>Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan</i> Usha Ramanathan, Legal Scholar Sumandro Chattapadhyay, Centre for Internet and Society</p> <p>Moderator Parminder Jeet Singh, IT for Change</p> <p>Discussant Col. Mathew Thomas, Civil society activist and retired army officer</p>
12.20 PM to 1.10 PM	<p>Session 2. What is new about the new governance paradigm? What does this mean for the future of grassroots democracy?</p> <p>This lecture will demonstrate how the shift to digitalized governance is characterized by the emergence of new forms of intermediation in the state-citizen relationship, ‘rule by data’ and arrangements in which private actors are increasingly occupying core positions. It will demystify critical concepts in this area such as ‘algorithmic decision-making’, ‘big data analysis’ and so on. In particular, it will focus on the question, <i>What must we do to re-invigorate grassroots democracy in this moment of transition?</i></p>

	<p>Lecture for 30 minutes, followed by open discussion for 20 minutes</p> <p>Speaker Prabir Purkayastha, Society for Knowledge Commons</p> <p>Chair Nikhil Dey, <i>Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan</i></p>
1.10 PM to 2.10 PM	Lunch
2.10 PM to 3.45 PM	<p>Session 3. Citizen engagement in technocratic times Format: Panel Presentations, followed by open discussion</p> <p>The digitalized governance paradigm has, by and large, legitimized the marketization of governance, actively promoting clientelism and undermining citizen claims over the state. But increasing diffusion of digital technologies has also seen citizens forging new spaces and new modes to assert themselves. There are also a few instances wherein public authorities have created online platforms, seeking citizen engagement for participatory democracy. This session focuses on citizen participation, speaking to the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How has digitalization changed citizen experiences of access to public information, grievance redressal and consultative processes? Under what conditions can digitalized citizen-engagement be transformative?• How can citizens use data for participatory local governance? What can we learn from existing initiatives in this area?• How can we ensure that the shift to data-based decision-making does not end up disciplining citizen-voice?• What legal-institutional mechanisms are necessary to address emerging challenges to civil-political rights in online spaces? Do we need new laws? <p>12-minute presentations from 4 panelists, followed by short comments from 2 discussants for 15 minutes, and open discussion for 20 minutes</p> <p>Speakers Shankar, <i>Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan</i> Rajendran Narayanan, Program for Liberation Technology Amber Sinha, Centre for Internet and Society Deepti Bharthur, IT for Change</p> <p>Chair Sejal Dand, ANANDI & MAKAAAM</p> <p>Discussants Karuna Muthiah, State Rural Livelihood Mission, Government of Tamil Nadu Vipul Mudgal, Inclusive Media for Change</p>
3.45 PM to 4.15 PM	Tea break

4.15 PM to 5.45 PM	<p>Session 4. Governing the Smart City Format: Panel Presentations, followed by open discussion</p> <p>Under the Smart Cities Mission, the government has embarked on creating IT-enabled cities under a PPP model. As platform-based services owned and maintained by private companies reconfigure the urban space, questions about privatization of essential urban services, enclosure of public data and need for a new social contract between government and citizen, become vital. This session will focus on exploring and evaluating the contours of the Smart City project, using it as an exemplar for highlighting some critical challenges for inclusive citizenship and democratic accountability posed by the new governance paradigm.</p> <p>The following questions will act as the basis of discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key concerns in the Smart Cities programme with respect to democratic accountability? • How can we rethink <i>Smart Cities</i> in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - address urban governance from the standpoint of accountability to the last citizen? - ensure that data-based solutions in urban governance are transparent, respectful of individual privacy and embedded in public interest? <p>12-minute presentations from 4 panelists, followed by short comments from 3 discussants for 15 minutes, and open discussion for 20 minutes</p> <p>Speakers Kshithij Urs, ActionAid Swapna Sundar, IP Dome Satyarupa Shekhar, Citizen Consumer and Civic Action Group Preeti Sampat, Ambedkar University, TBC</p> <p>Chair Anupam Saraph, Researcher (Complex Systems)</p> <p>Discussants Sukarn Singh, Software Freedom Law Centre Jeevika Shiv, ANANDI Ananta Sharma, Access Now</p>
6.00 PM to 7.30 PM	Organizers' Meeting for next steps
15th November	Day 2
9.30 AM to 11.00 AM	<p>Session 5: Back to the basics – first principles for democratic accountability in the age of digitalized governance Format: Panel Presentations, followed by open discussion</p> <p>Digitalization and data-based decision-making have completely transformed the rules of the game as far as democratic governance is concerned. The old rules for ensuring participation and inclusion of citizens in welfare systems, public information outreach and deliberative forums are no longer adequate. This session will focus on thinking through new legal-institutional safeguards, policy frameworks, procedures and administrative guidelines, techno-design principles and data governance guidelines that can form the basis of democratic accountability in the digital age.</p>

	<p>The following issues will form the basis of the discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System design for digitalized welfare (including norms, procedures and administrative practices) for local responsiveness • Data architecture for digitalized welfare service systems • Rules and protocols for ‘right to participation’ in the digital age, including a right to quality connectivity, and the right to free expression • Guidelines for data in governance, covering transparency and privacy considerations and frameworks for data ownership and use. <p>12-minute presentations from 3 panelists, followed by comments from 2 discussants for 10 minutes, and open discussion for 30 minutes</p> <p>Speakers Anupam Saraph, Researcher (Complex Systems) Rahul Sharma, Data Security Council of India Osama Manzar, Digital Empowerment Foundation</p> <p>Chair Anjali Bhardwaj, National Campaign for People’s Right to Information</p> <p>Discussants Jean Dreze, Ranchi University Inayat Sabhikhi, <i>Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan</i></p>
11.00 AM to 11.20 AM	Tea
11.20 AM to 11.30 AM	Orientation to group-work – handing out of background notes for each group
11.30 AM to 1.00 PM	<p>Group work: Mapping democratic accountability in the digital age This session will be based on group work in 4 thematic groups. Background information will be provided as hand-outs.</p> <p>Group 1. Ensuring accountability and local responsiveness in digitalized welfare services Group 2. A governance framework for data-in-governance Group 3. Rethinking the right to participation in the digital age: Guarantees and institutional safeguards Group 4. Managing private actors in digitally mediated governance arrangements</p>
1.00 PM to 2.00 PM	Lunch
2.00 PM to 3.15 PM	Group work continued with working tea
3.15 PM to 4.30 PM	Concluding Plenary: Towards a charter on democratic accountability in the digital age Remarks from organizers and open discussion