

Technology, Social Process and Gender in the Information Society



Workshop held by IT for Change in partnership
with Luleå Institute of Technology and HIVOS

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Workshop Report

Table of Contents

I. Background and Overview	2
II. Introductory Remarks	3
III. Session on Technology, Society and Gender	3
Discussion Session	4
IV. Session on Situating Gender in Community Informatics.....	5
V. Session on Interactive Research Frameworks	9
VI. Session on Framing Feminist Engagements in the Information Society ...	10
VII. Emerging Insights from the Workshop for Research and Action.....	11
Identity and the public sphere.....	11
Gender "paradigms"	12
Community informatics and gender.....	13
Politics around knowledge creation	15
VIII. Summary of Key Points.....	16
IX. Annexures.....	18
Annexure 1: Workshop Agenda	18
Annexure 2: List of Participants	22

Report on the Workshop on Technology, Social Process and Gender in the Information Society

I. Background and Overview

A two-day workshop was held between February 5th-6th, 2007 to look at gender related changes using new information and communication technologies (ICT). The workshop adopted a systems approach to examine ICTs – looking at the intersecting grids of social and institutional change, gender transformative processes and techno-social models. These dimensions are central to the emerging field of community informatics, which adopts such a systems view. The workshop looked at ICT-induced change from different vantages: for example, how interactive features of new technologies change local knowledge paradigms and where gender is situated in this; how access to empowering information and to public services has induced and impacted women's empowerment processes; what the significance of audio-visual ICTs is for effecting change that is empowering to women; how ICTs can help overcome the structural isolation of women by providing them a new social space that can trigger empowering political processes, and how different ownership and enterprise patterns have gendered impacts.

Participants included representatives from Indian NGOs, researchers from the Luleå Institute of Technology and other experts from gender and ICT fields. Presenters used a systems lens to provide an integrated view of how possibilities for women's empowerment through ICTs play out in the different contextual models, tending towards lasting shifts in gendered power relationships.

Introductory remarks were provided by Ms. Anita Gurumurthy from IT for Change, India and Dr. Ewa Gunnarsson from the Luleå Institute of Technology, Sweden. The workshop was spread out over the following sessions:

1) Technology, Society and Gender

The discussions in this session revisited social assumptions behind technology assimilation with lessons from history on how technology changes have impacted gender relations, and also covered the new context and opportunities in the information society.

2) Situating Gender in Community Informatics

This session explored whether and how the information and communications architecture at the community level perpetuates gender inequalities and how new ICTs offer possibilities for structural shifts that impact existing gender relations. The session examined how the new paradigms of interactivity, low communication costs, information organising and access, asynchronous communication and other digital tools and applications can be used for developing contextual informatics – and how these changes can be directed to impact gender relations in positive ways. Through presentations from practitioners in India and Sweden, this session explored techno-social models and how they address women's appropriation of and control over technology.

3) Interactive Research Frameworks – Approaching Gender in Community Informatics

This session was devoted entirely to the new gender paradigms that are playing out in the information society and how best to structure research and practice around these paradigms.

4) The Information Society Paradigm – How the Local is Shaped by the Global

Through commentaries on the discussions and presentations over the two days, this session flagged macro level issues, built recommendations, and highlighted the enabling conditions for influencing gender related outcomes in community based design.

Brief overviews of each of the presentations from the sessions are described in the report. Emerging discussion points have been synthesised and incorporated into the insights section of this report.

II. Introductory Remarks

Ms. Anita Gurumurthy started the workshop off by welcoming all participants and proceeded to narrate three points of vantage that guided the ideation behind the workshop. First, the meetings between IT for Change and Dr. Ewa Gunnarsson from the Luleå Institute of Technology initiated a series of conversations around gender in India and Sweden including comparisons between the countries, which provided the initial direction for the workshop. Second, the Mahiti Manthana field project implemented by IT for Change has generated learnings on the transformatory potential of technologies for marginalised women, and the recognition that ICTs will be shaped based on developmental ethics only when women engage with them. Ms. Gurumurthy explained how the Mahiti Manthana project is a way to understand process in terms of the empowering potential of ICTs for women, for instance, computers are breaking traditional boundaries in terms of impact on identity and perception. The project offers insights about how external institutions like the market are affecting or restricting the use of these technologies, and these have contributed to the development of the workshop theme. Finally, Ms. Gurumurthy indicated that the workshop aims to explore community informatics through a gendered lens and also discuss how information and communication (I&C) systems need to proceed. She stressed that information and communication technologies for development (ICTD) projects are not about design alone, but also about the politics and power of information itself. The workshop aims to analyse the nuanced community effects of ICTs, which may not actually be unifying but may, on the other hand, create new conflicts that challenge gender.

Dr. Ewa Gunnarsson followed Ms. Gurumurthy and welcomed the participants. She highlighted the initial association of Luleå Institute of Technology with IT for Change, and the ensuing discussions on cross cultural associations, information technology, gender and interactive research. She emphasised that the workshop had the potential go much further by reflecting on the congruencies between Indian ICTD projects and those in Sweden, and that it signified the beginning of a more concrete collaborative research programme between India and Sweden.

Her welcome was followed by a round of introductions by all participants.

III. Session on Technology, Society and Gender

The first presenter was Dr. Gloria Bonder who discussed the social and political aspects of appropriation and change within the gender and ICTs discourse in Latin America. She briefly situated the Latin American situation by highlighting that the rapid spread of ICTs in the past 5-10 years has reached urban residents with medium to high incomes and large enterprises. In terms of the gender gap, only 36% of the continent's users are female. Based on her experiences with ICT projects, including one on at-risk youth, Dr. Bonder observed that participants generally realise the advantages of engaging with ICTs. ICTs provide spaces and tools for communication, and increase employability via formal skills, certifications, and access to the labour market. However, a linear optimism in gender equality rhetoric lacks a recognition of ongoing power conflicts, and a denial of the diversity and contextual differences between gender groups, which does not allow for realisation of the full potential and possibilities of ICTs. This limited framing of the issue leads to projects that are focused on concepts such as mainstreaming, access and use, as opposed to a deeper analysis of the power relations that need to be addressed for gender equality. Dr. Bonder cautioned that in the information society, naming and normative representation determine how power is constructed in social institutions and structures. Therefore, the concepts of symbols, metaphors and names are the ones that require in-depth analysis and discourse building.

Dr. Bonder highlighted two key issues, one related to the appropriation and control of ICTs, and the social and institutional transformations required for equitable appropriation. An imperative for researchers and practitioners is to understand ICTs as cultural artifacts or cultural devices that produce meaning. From that understanding, conditions of appropriation and definition of ICTs as contextual processes are better recognised. The other issue concerns the analysis of power relations that construct the information society, not only from the economics lens, but also from a social realm. Ultimately these power relations establish what is regarded as true in the information society and determine the future direction of growth of the information society in terms of naming, symbolic and metaphorical representations.

Dr. Govind Kelkar was the second speaker of the session and her presentation stemmed from research on women employed in the information technology (IT) sector. She highlighted the dual nature of women's participation in this sector, with its potential for gender equality coexisting with reproductions of cultural norms that constrain development of women's agency. Technological change can facilitate social change, and has positioned patriarchy into a domain of contestation, without however leading to the re-definition of social and cultural norms. Women who have entered the IT workforce continue to address responsibilities at home in addition to those in the industry itself, while cultural ceilings and the prevalence of the masculine order limit women's agency.

Dr. Kelkar emphasised that employment in the IT sector builds the individual capacities of women, which in turn play a role in addressing issues of gender equality. However the range of decision making at the household level is not distributed equally amongst men and women. Professional mobility and a concrete redefinition of household roles has not occurred. Significantly, women are turning to IT work because of the improved social recognition and the increased opportunity cost of their labour, which is absent in the case of house work. She concluded with the cognizance that asymmetries of cultural flows can be addressed through IT.

The final speaker in this session, Dr. Michael Gurstein began with the argument that ICTs are fundamentally about power relations. Just as corporates have harnessed the nature of these power relations, so too must grassroots ICT initiatives, and particularly in their focus on gender relations. Community informatics is the process of enabling and empowering the local communities with ICTs, similar to how ICTs have enabled and empowered large corporations. The challenge for community informatics practitioners and researchers is not to stand back and reflect on, but to engage with communities as the agents and clients of design and development of ICT systems.

Dr. Gurstein contended that community informatics processes must consider design, development and implementation challenges. As communities become enabled with increasing control through the use of ICTs, the issue of gender inequalities and disparities become fundamentally important. He recognised that although communities are not homogeneous, empowerment can happen by devolution of responsibilities that are reflective of the individual needs of each group.

Discussion Session

Dr. Gloria Bonder stressed the importance of critically examining development projects in the ICT arena to see whether they are reproducing the tried and tested concepts of women and development or women in development. This traditional approach to ICT projects needs to be changed, since its inadequacy has already been documented. With the increasing interest in ICTD, the opportunity now exists to reinvent the way both gender and appropriation of ICTs are positioned as power relations.

Dr. Vinod Pavarala remarked that women are rarely involved in the needs assessment of ICTD projects, and are at the receiving end of policies and research agenda. Whenever

women are brought into ICTD debates, they are treated as passive recipients, or targets of information. They are rarely looked at as people who are active producers of information and content and active users of information. Dr. Pavarala argued for the reversal of this trend, and for the positioning of women as producers of content, and not just as receivers of content.

Mr. Parminder Jeet Singh contended that, in the discourse on gender, it is equally important to focus on both the relational issues as well as the political issues that surround the use of the term. He pointed out that gender gets de-politicised in the mainstream language of policy institutions, and is often used to 'moderate' the language of the feminist movement. The introduction of men into gender debates is not to ascribe victimhood to one group over another, but to emphasise the relational element, and hence maintain focus on the power aspects fundamental to the use of the term gender. He additionally noted that although community informatics is largely about implementation and design issues, the policy connections are equally important. The goal of enabling communities to use and control technologies is connected to the fact that a political economy of information society is evolving in an independent direction and policies are taking up a new marketisation of the governance idiom. Therefore, those engaged in community informatics must remain cognizant of the larger policy implications and synergies of their work, particularly so in terms of gender.

Dr. Ewa Gunnarsson concluded this session by reminding the participants that gender theories need to be developed in relation to the differing realities of differing contexts, which in turn implies different strategies for addressing key issues.

IV. Session on Situating Gender in Community Informatics

Ms. Jessica Mayberry, the first speaker at the afternoon session, represented Video Volunteers (VV) and Dhristi Media Collective. VV and Dhristi engage with grassroots NGOs for setting up community video units (CVU) across the country with trained video producers selected from amongst the community. VV focuses on community media, produced for and by the communities themselves, and the CVU is the platform for this engagement with media. Decisions and choices on content are taken exclusively by the community, thus promoting leadership and ownership. Specifically, women involved in the community video unit gain legitimacy and status within the community because of their handling of equipment and comfort with the technology. This example reflects that the more complex the technology, the more empowering it is for the women who use it. Additionally, visual media provides women with a legitimate platform for expression of their stories and voices. Traditionally women have had minimal presence in the public sphere, and providing them a space through video allows for dialogue, sharing and contributes to empowerment. Ms. Mayberry stressed that, "This technology allows a way for women to get out of the house, and to ask questions." She concluded that intensive time investment is a prerequisite of gender sensitive ICTD project design, which is an important pointer for policy decisions.

Ms. Sejal Dand from Area Networking and Development Initiatives (ANANDI) followed next and spoke of her organisation's role in strengthening empowerment processes for grassroots women's groups through innovative use of technologies. ANANDI uses women's songs recorded on cassettes and video screenings as platforms for the public legitimising of women's voices. By synergising traditional methods of sharing – songs and stories – with ICTs, ANANDI aims to address patriarchy and the privatisation of women's experiences. Ms. Dand shared her concerns on enabling community media, "Although we say community media, there is always the interface of an organisation that ultimately dictates content. Therefore a lot of media material produced tends to have an element of informing and education, which is a limitation that we have to address."

Ms. Mridula Swamy presented IT for Change's field project Mahiti Manthana, an integrated ICT strategy that plugs into the objectives of Mahila Samakhya, Karnataka (MSK), a

grassroots governmental NGO, focusing on empowerment of marginalised dalit women by organising them into self-help groups (sangha) and addressing their functional, strategic and structural isolation concerns. Mahiti Manthana helps MSK meet its goals through the use of ICTs—radio, video and telecentres to strengthen the sangha social capital and create a platform for marginalised, illiterate women, in contrast to the way print media has isolated them. Ms. Swamy stressed, “It is important for us to engage in making women’s voices heard, and being legitimised by using radio programming, films and telecentres.”

Mahiti Manthana adopts an institutional radio format, which serves as a means for sangha women’s sharing and peer-to-peer learning, while also playing the role of a message board for MSK to convey information and discuss relevant developmental issues. In the video strategy, Mahiti Manthana tries to balance a community media approach and a documentary model of filmmaking. Videos are used as stand-alone instructional tools, mediums for self-expression, collective learning, and for recording organisational processes and sharing them as best practices. They plug gaps in MSK’s educational and information sharing strategies. At the telecentres, in addition to the regular paid and non-paid services, Ms. Swamy noted, “The real empowerment possibilities for the communities lie in their participation in collection of information from households in key areas like health and education, which then serve as a platform for monitoring the provisions of public institutions.” The sangha women’s ownership in the telecentre process is critical for them to see its relevance to their lives, and make decisions that are relevant to the community, because the whole process is embedded in the community. The Mahiti Manthana model positions ICTs to enable power shifts and revamp village information processes through the introduction of new routes of inclusion, information related empowerment and citizenship for MSK sangha women.

The first speaker after lunch was Dr. Kanchan Malik from the University of Hyderabad who presented data and analyses from research on four community radio initiatives in India. Three of the four – those of Deccan Development Society, Kutch Mahila Vikas Sanghatan and Voices-Myrada are developing community based programming with local women’s organisations, using indigenous dialogue and cultural forms for providing contextualised, local information on issues of governance, agriculture, natural resources and gender equality. Women in the communities are involved in the community radio initiatives at several levels: as listeners, content contributors, producers, planners and managers.

All programmes are constructing spaces for women to develop their own narratives and voice their concerns, create public identities for themselves, and share and build on collective learnings. Additionally, women believe that listening sessions during meetings of women’s groups provides a conducive atmosphere for acceptance of the radio. Their participation is seeding a process of challenging traditionally accepted forms of media by engaging in contextually relevant content and local language programmes. Dr. Malik reflected, “All projects have recognised the value of putting ownership, control and management of the community radio stations into the hands of local women, independent of commercial and state interests.” Clearly, allowing women to determine the whole programmatic sequence, including language, form, expression, and ordering of slots, has potential for transformatory change. Through their direct and personal involvement in the technology, they are challenging socially ascribed gender roles, creating new spaces for sharing of voice, and redefining their agency and perceptions within the local communities. Dr. Malik concluded by recognising that the process of shifting control of technologies to the traditionally excluded and marginalised provides women an arena outside the state apparatus that can be used as a potent space for democratic deliberations and negotiations.

Dr. Zubeeda Quraishy followed with her presentation on implementation of a Health Information Systems Program (HISP) project in the state of Andhra Pradesh in India. Empowering grassroots health workers, who are mostly women, at the primary health centres was a major focus of the project. The workers were trained in using ICTs for recording village level data and entry into a computerised District Health Information System (DHIS). Dr. Quraishy observed, “We found that improving the processes of health information

transactions and the development of health workers' capacity to deal with information and computers helped to provide a sense of empowerment and commitment...which, in the long run will contribute to improvement of health delivery."

However, she also highlighted the socio-political complexities that arise from introduction of a technological intervention into traditionally accepted modes of functioning of institutions and structural processes. A concurrent World Bank funded project implemented by the Andhra Pradesh State government hampered implementation of the independent HISP project. Sustainability of the process is also questionable in terms of commitment from higher authorities in the public health system. DHIS data cannot be manipulated thus disallowing the falsification of data to attain quantitative targets, which in turn contributed to decreased motivation from health workers who were unable to reach the structurally pre-decided and often unrealistic goals set for them by health department authorities. Institutional issues have constrained the motivation and potential of ICT incorporation into the health system, and these challenge the sustainability of the project. She concluded by emphasising that "While implementing ICT projects, along with the hype that we give to technological issues, we should give more importance to social and organisational issues."

Ms. Rukmini Vemraju from the Commonwealth of Learning (COL) wrapped up the session with her presentation on COL's involvement in technology projects focusing on interactions with context and gender relations. She highlighted the limited use of ICTs in all pre-project ecologies, which causes the excessive stress on access during design and implementation. This focus, however, ignores the fact that improved access does not imply effective use unless it encompasses creation of adequate content. The use of technology depends on the intermediary agency of women, and appropriation of technology is related more closely to content than to access. She stressed that the imperative should be on reducing the overemphasis on access and directing energies toward content that pulls people together and enables ownership.

Ms. Vemraju classified women's involvement with ICTs at the community level into the "good, bad and ugly". Empirical evidence for the positive effect of technology on women abounds, but it is important not to ignore the fact that in some cases women are ridiculed in the community for their engagement with, for instance, computers or radio recording equipment. Even worse is when technology captures sensitive stories that unexpectedly work irrevocably against the women themselves. Additionally, the focus on financial sustainability in donor-driven projects is insensitive to the ground realities of women's agency and empowerment issues. These considerations need to be factored in during gender sensitive project design and implementation and to ensure that ICTs provide the trigger for social change rather than setting community processes backward. She concluded that the more contextualised and participatory is a project, the chances for the 'good' are greater. Once women own a process, in their own time and in their own frames of reference, the quality of content produced by them increases. This is a slow and gradual process, but a project will be sustained only once content comes from women.

The final segment of this session consisted of speakers from the Luleå Institute of Technology (LTU) and opened with Ms. Susanne Spik from the Sami community of reindeer herders and Dr. Maria Udén from LTU. Dr. Udén remarked that women in Sami villages are subjects of a persistent patriarchal language in Swedish legislation that prevents their equal sharing of assets and property. The women were looking to improve gender relations in their villages and decided to collaborate with LTU in a technological intervention project. This project was driven by the fact that reindeer herders spend a large part of each year in areas where they have absolutely no access to communication. They run an ancient 'industry' using traditional organisational means, but with the help of technology, they have the potential to change structures and processes in a positive way for the community.

The Sami Connectivity project consists of a specially contextualised and designed system of delayed Internet access, which is appropriated by women herders like Ms. Spik, for receiving

and conveying information within a wider geographical space. The community also provides input for development of applications to coordinate herding. One such application developed by Ms. Spik and a colleague is a reindeer tracking system to help track and record the positioning and movement of herds during the year. The women see the potential of the technology for showcasing and sharing their histories, knowledge and traditions by weaving them into the system. Ms. Spik said, "Technological development gives us these opportunities and what we need today is to get the feeling that we are on the right track and that we can contribute to others."

Dr. Udén concluded by highlighting the practicalities of socio-political ecologies around technological development. She said, "There is no Internet connectivity, cell phone connectivity, no roads [in the Sami villages]... the idea is also that there shouldn't be roads because then the reindeer don't thrive well. Connectivity is far too expensive and intermittent. We have this challenge in the far north, but for technical experts everything has to do with connectivity, equipment, business models. All of this must happen in parallel. But realistically we must first explore if traffic is at ALL possible and then we can think about sustainability models and future directions." This presentation clearly highlighted the fact that as indigenous women become producers of technology, it begins to turn accepted systems on their head and thus signifies an opportunity for change.

This presentation was followed by Ms. Malin Lindberg of LTU who discussed her research on innovation systems in Sweden, which are essentially networks or partnerships between public, private, academic and civil society actors. An objective of her work is to study the 'raising' of experience from partners in the network onto a common shared platform of knowledge. A common feature amongst various regional networks is that they are active in the area of ICTs, which has not been traditionally represented in Swedish governmental policy. More importantly, women are a central feature of these networks, which is indicative of potential for their progress. Civil society is also actively engaged in these systems and thus the networks actively respond to the demand of potential users.

She pointed out that users can either be viewed as citizens with rights or as consumers with money. For instance, she observed, "The Sami project discussed earlier primarily looks at users as citizens with access rights, even if they are in sparsely populated areas." Generally all the public funded systems in Sweden are within male dominated industries. But within the Sami project, the innovations systems that were established provide an insight into the ways in which actors can cooperate and thus produce innovations that are designed to meet the needs of users. She also asserted that these innovations would have remained unexplored if the systems had been connected to traditional actors of the region, like authorities, or technical parts of university. Women's involvement has been a significant factor for promoting innovations.

The next speaker was Dr. Håkan Alm from LTU who talked about the usability aspects of IT within the Swedish context and indicated general findings that could be applied elsewhere. His research showed the imperative for IT solutions to be adapted to the needs, abilities and limitations of user groups and the contexts in which they operate. An important aspect of technology design is to ensure that it is easy to use, so as to discourage dependency on specialists and technical experts. This becomes a significant consideration for ensuring sustainability of grassroots projects.

Dr. Alm highlighted the concept of 'quality of use', which is influenced by considerations of efficiency, flexibility and user-friendliness of technologies. The attitude that a user has toward a technology is directly related to the expressed behaviour. Gender advocates in the field of usability need to consider the fact that many technological products are designed from a male perspective, which usually implies that quality of use by women is potentially constrained. He concluded by highlighting the Sami project as a good example of gender sensitive usability design. The project focused on providing information on relevant topics, while encouraging women to communicate and interact with each other at flexible convenient

times and locations. The usability aspects of the Sami projects should inform the structuring of similar projects.

Dr. Ulf Mellström from LTU spoke about his research in Malaysia, where ICTs have been integrated into the country's notion of modernity and the resulting consequences for gender relations. He highlighted the similarities between India and Malaysia with respect to governmental spending and policy on ICTs. Malaysia positions ICTs as a tool for poverty eradication and economic prosperity. The government has harnessed the potential of ICTs to transform the country from an importer to a producer of prime technologies.

In Malaysia the number of women in the IT sector is high, but paradoxically the explanation is due to ethnification of Malaysian society that determines which groups of people are allowed to enter into higher education. It is important to evaluate quantifiable progress in women's representation because of the fact that it is driven by divisive ethnic quotas. Additionally, in terms of actual jobs, within the products sector, low skill jobs are predominantly performed by women. At the same time, there are women professionals in the IT industry occupying executive positions, which has led to the formation of a new middle class of women (and men) who are appropriating the benefits of the information society. Dr. Mellström concluded by emphasising that gender identity is closely associated with ethnic and class differences and it is crucial to not analyse them as separate systems. Future work must focus on exploring these intersections that play out in complex societies.

Ms. Caroline Wamala of LTU followed next and presented her research on women and ICT use in the monarchy of Swaziland. Her work centres on what forms of access exist and the ecology of national ICT policies in issues of access and appropriation. She detailed the ways in which a woman's contextual positioning influences her use of ICTs. Secretaries, for instance are technically inclined, but cannot be too much so, so as to not ruin their chances of marriage. Single mothers look to ICTs specifically for their economic possibilities, while married women have the advantage of technology in their homes; however they do not own the resources, and therefore have to seek permission from their sons and husbands for use. In instances where women gain access at public Internet cafés, their participation is impacted by operation hours and location. Another constraining factor for women is attitudinal since they do not have an articulated need for the new technology. These attitudes can be changed only through experience and use of the technology.

Ms. Wamala emphasised that "ICTs can give women empowerment with sacrifice. By use, women gain power that Swazi men do not like, and this causes some of the social issues women are faced with." Clearly, ICT use and appropriation leads to disruptions in accepted gender relations, which in turn signifies a critical empowering possibility for women. Development groups should take into consideration the different social factors and actors that may impact use of ICT by women during project design and implementation.

V. Session on Interactive Research Frameworks

Dr. Ewa Gunnarsson spoke extensively on methodologies for combining action research traditions with feminist research traditions. Both traditions emphasise the need to move from a limited arena of knowledge production into an inclusive extended arena with the goals of increasing validity and contextual robustness of research findings. She discussed the interactive research framework, which proposes equal collaboration between researchers and practitioners in problem formulation, data collection, analysis, writing and internalising feedback. Additionally, an interactive research project is reflective of researcher subjectivities and contextualities, as well as cognizance of inclusion and exclusion of knowledge and experiences. While acknowledging the difficulty in maintaining this level of collaboration throughout a research endeavour, Dr. Gunnarsson illustrated applications of the interactive research framework based on her experiences in the VINNOVA Project. In this project, interactive research methodologies were used to strengthen gender equality in the organisation and gender competence in formulation of policy documents, evaluation,

programme areas, and research application. Participants in interactive research will inevitably face dilemmas and conflicts during the process, but navigating through these has the potential to generate learnings that would otherwise remain unarticulated in the shadow of dominant discourse.

Following Dr. Gunnarsson's presentation, Ms. Anita Gurumurthy spoke about gender paradigms in the new information society. She detailed the differences in meaning and attributions given to the information society by varying actors, and how they guide the production of knowledge in the information society. Feminists and political actors need to have political incentives for engaging in the information society, and the workshop aimed to initiate the process of creation and articulation of these incentives. She also stressed the information society lens for looking at gender and feminism as being distinct from the market and globalisation lens. Further, Ms. Gurumurthy articulated the blurring of definitions between a particular paradigm and its artifacts. The analysis of social change through the information society lens should therefore imply using a paradigmatic viewpoint, rather than that of artifacts. She further detailed that the technological paradigm was playing out at the meso level of institutional and social change, with its centralising nature and redefinitions of women's identity and the public sphere. The emancipatory potential of the information society lies engaging at the meso level, and feminists and gender advocates must engage with this space.

VI. Session on Framing Feminist Engagements in the Information Society

This session consisted of a series of commentaries on themes that emerged at the workshop. The speakers followed a free-flowing conversation format with open discussions. What follows below are brief summaries of each of the commentaries.

Ms. Sujata Gothoskar spoke of women's movements and connected them to the changing information society landscape. For instance, the self-help group (SHG) movement places focus on local-level entrepreneurship and economic self-sufficiency. From just being producers, women have also become retailers and marketers. ICTs are increasingly enabling and facilitating these community level shifts, and Ms. Gothoskar cautioned that the mechanisms that get built around these changes must reflect gender equity concerns, and not just address women's functional needs. Additionally, women's movements are framed within the context of a larger community, which is not a unified concept. She highlighted the feminist debate about strengthening communities vis-à-vis new change processes, and particularly in the case of ICT led information and communication dynamics.

Drawing on comparisons between his research in Malaysia and Scandinavia, Dr. Ulf Mellström observed that throughout history, men have positioned themselves centrally in the arena of technology. Technology is normatively associated with masculine values and technology is thus represented as a masculine cultural expression. For deconstruction of these norms, Dr. Mellström advocated intersectional understanding through an integrative analysis of the concepts of gender, age, race, class, and nation, all of which are situated and localised. He talked about following the sociology and anthropology of informatics to understand the effect of technologies on cultural systems, without resorting to simplistic notions of masculinity and femininity.

Dr. Vinod Pavarala expressed his reservations regarding the paradigmatic status given to the information society. Using the example of villages in Andhra Pradesh, India which do not even have electricity, he highlighted that farmers in these areas operate in different paradigms. He cautioned against the tendency of donors and implementers to slip into technological determinism when discussing ICTs, while ignoring other processes – like women's movements, caste consciousness and institutionalisation of grassroots democracies. Women's empowerment objectives will be influenced by these contextual factors and ICTs cannot be positioned in isolated frames of reference. In the community context, he

specifically remarked on the need to consider relations other than gender, for preventing the creation of a technology elite and new community hierarchies. Gender and ICTs should therefore imply power relationships between women and men as also relationships between women and women.

Based on her analysis of the variety of ICTD projects, Dr. Gloria Bonder elaborated three models for inclusion of gender in ICT projects. She referred to the first model as the deficit model, driven by the goal of compensating for the 'deficit' in women's lives, and assuring equal access of women to ICTs, and participation in education and industry. This model, adopted by many international aid organisations, reflects an instrumentalist view of ICTs and women. A second model for project design problematises masculine culture, and focuses efforts on valourising women's contribution to content, design and policies surrounding ICTs. This model is essentialist in its approach, and it risks maintaining the existing binaries between men and women, without challenging them at fundamental levels. The final category considers the gender power relation throughout all steps of the ICT intervention, and recognises the evolving nature of relations in the community informatics context. This strategy is transformative because it reflects the dynamism of power relations, and calls for engagement at all levels.

Mr. Parminder Jeet Singh reiterated the objective of the workshop as a platform for generating dialogue on the change in social processes when ICTs are taken up by communities. He briefly highlighted how the presentations reflected the interfaces between techno-social processes and gender. Emerging insights indicated ways in which both projects and research frameworks can be evolved around these new systems. The insights generated from the workshop will direct future efforts in this area.

VII. Emerging Insights from the Workshop for Research and Action

The commentaries and discussions emerging from the workshop can be divided into four different, yet overlapping themes related to gender and the information society. Each of these themes will be discussed in detail and supported by inputs provided by the participants. Discussions are synthesised in the following sections so that readers have theme-based takeaways from this workshop.

Identity and the public sphere

A theme that emerged from the discussions on field-level projects was that of public spheres, gender identities and women's citizenship. It is clearly established that ICTs are redefining the boundaries between public and private spheres. For instance, the cyberspace is a public and social space that is constituted and negotiated by participating individuals, communities and institutions. In a general sense, the Internet presents women with an alternative public sphere, as well as an opportunity to use this extended sphere for engaging with development issues. This point was highlighted by Ms. Anita Gurusurthy who spoke about the increased transparency of governance in the information society arena, with women experiencing greater entry points for political opportunities like voice, participation and activism, all of which are improving their citizenship rights.

In the public sphere, identity is a negotiable construct and is linked to agency and citizenship. For women, citizenship can imply a wide gamut of rights, including claiming rightful wages, gaining legitimacy of voice, ability to appropriate resources equitably, and participation in public spaces. Ms. Gurusurthy contended that, "A single concept of 'women's citizenship' does not exist, and citizenship rights are objects of struggle that need to be defended, reinterpreted and extended." The information society culture causes various dislocations that allow for the creation of spaces for women's rights, participation, voice and agency that consequently redefine women's citizenship. This inherently dynamic nature requires that feminists engage with the political aspects of emerging 'public' spaces and explore new frameworks for dovetailing technology and citizenship issues.

The VV experience, shared by Ms. Jessica Mayberry, clearly represents the significance of technology media as a platform for women's expression of voice and collective sharing of perspectives, which existed previously only in the private realm. Audio and video technologies bypass the barriers of illiteracy and also create a safe space for women to challenge patriarchies and build solidarities. Ms. Sejal Dand of ANANDI narrated her experience of innovatively incorporating ICTs into traditional communication means to challenge the privatisation of women's experiences and voices. By recording and distributing audio tapes of women's folk songs, women's traditional mode of communication has gained legitimacy, and representation in the public sphere has given strength to their voices. Ms. Dand said, "The songs created a space for them [women] to say...what they couldn't say in a dialogue...technologies have proved to be powerful for recording and sharing testimonies." The women went on to produce a set of songs as a part of a 'Right to Food' campaign, and have also ventured into video making for capturing experiences in one community and screening in another community, or for presentation at a public hearing with a government representative. Technology use is thus promoting women's political engagement, and they are able to use technology to strengthen traditional information methods and directly challenge patriarchies in their institutional form. For instance, in the labour paradigm, Ms. Sujata Gothoskar reflected on the benefits of improving women's access and training in ICTs for facilitating their engagement with citizenship rights. She argued for the necessity of incorporating both the context of training and capacity for communication into women's formal and informal labour practices.

Access, use and appropriation of public information form critical steps for women's assertion of their citizenship. Ms. Gurumurthy said, "Feminisation of access provides women with a logical point to ask questions about the governance of the information society itself. Questions on who in our local communities are taking decisions about access, and who in our institutions and governments are taking decisions about the meaning of the information society are important ones to ask." Dr. Kanchan Malik summarised, "The process of shifting control of media technologies to women provides them an institutional space for political participation, which in turn facilitates collective action, as well as offers a realistic emancipatory potential." The sessions and discussions on ICT projects are indicative of how technology contributes to strengthening women's presence in the public sphere and also in the legitimisation of their identities and experiences for enabling engagement with public information and citizenship efforts.

Gender "paradigms"

A theme running throughout the workshop discussion sessions was the conviction that the information society lens is more than just the globalisation lens or the marketisation lens. Ms. Gurumurthy said, "The information society lens is quite distinct. It is through this lens that the new emerging gender paradigms can be recognised and identified." Speakers further argued that an information society lens on gender is needed for recognising the new paradigms that are being built. Traditionally, feminists had to largely adopt a reactive stance and toward industrial and technological advances, but when feminists recognise the paradigmatic nature of information society, they have the space to ascribe appropriate meaning at an early stage of information society induced transformations. She argued, "There is a new site of engagement, which is the interface between the technical and the social. This interface is actually causing a reconfiguring of our communities, with changes at the micro levels, and our feminist strategies have to engage at that level."

The information society paradigm on gender cannot be measured in terms of informatisation and empowerment indices, but rather in the non-linear process of the changing aspirations of women. For instance, decreasing fertility rates in countries like South Korea is reflective of the choices women are making, and how these choices are playing out in the realm of gender relations. The information society is providing a whole new paradigmatic lens for engaging with gender. Consider, for instance, the notions of control and censorship, which have to be

redefined and contextualised for the changing gender paradigm. Ms. Gothoskar said, "People are experimenting with sexuality [through cyberspace], and there is no point looking exclusively at victimhood. The first response of control and censorship needs to be questioned, different things need to be explored." Dr. Govind Kelkar also mentioned that women are accessing culturally inappropriate content and engaging in culturally inappropriate relationships, both of which are hugely transforming established social and personal systems. The new paradigm is signifying a redefinition of traditional boundaries of sexuality and self-expression. The conflict lines that are being drawn around these are indicative of entry points for women's struggles for empowerment. Ms. Gurumurthy aptly stated, "Struggle and conflict are two sides of the same coin."

The interfaces between the information society paradigm and reconstituted gender relations are complex and contested. For instance, Ms. Gothoskar reflected on corporate involvement in the self-help group (SHG) movement. Private companies work with SHG women on marketing of products, which on the surface provides much needed economic relief, and is setting into place a transformatory experience of technology mediated self sufficiency and independence. But she cautioned, "...this entire effort that we are involved in to get women into ICT projects needs mechanisms so that a situation doesn't occur where corporates subjugate women to market functioning." In another discussion, Ms. Gurumurthy highlighted these nuances when she said, "It is important to understand that just as we know that patriarchies are being reconstituted and perpetuated because of the Internet and Internet-based pornography, we know that the collective solidarity of women is also being elaborated through the very same technological paradigm."

Irrespective of the complex nature of information society transformations, the new paradigm is unquestioningly facilitating women's personal and collective development. Ms. Gurumurthy contended that, "In information society terms, appropriation is the emancipatory potential". Ms. Mayberry furthered this argument when she said, "The more complex is a technology, the greater is its empowerment potential." In aspects of labour as well, the gender contract is changing, steered largely by the changing opportunity cost of women's labour through their entry into the information society workforce, as was articulated by Ms. Gothoskar. Clearly, engagement with the new information society paradigm, both at political and practical levels, signifies an empowerment opportunity for women, and this reflects great significance for improvement of gender relations. Ms. Rukmini Vemraju summed up by indicating that the gender contract always exists, but the content that gets added to it is purely contextual. In that sense, the entire interaction between the social and technical aspects is important, and especially so in the face of changing gender paradigms.

Dr. Gloria Bonder succinctly encapsulated the representations of the paradigm when she opined, "The present and future of the information society has much to do with how we name it and what kind of representations we share about its appropriation by individuals, institutions and social structures." The power relations at play in this changing information society, especially relating to gender, signify a symbolic process of categorisation; and institutional transformations need to be negotiated for appropriation of resources in the information society realm. The imperative is for feminists to engage in these dynamically changing spaces and structures.

Community informatics and gender

Structural shifts in the I&C architecture of communities pose challenges to and opportunities for women's empowerment. Participants explored and debated the varied dynamics of community informatics and the impacts on gender relations. Discussions reflected the fact that the field of community informatics cannot be restricted to community-centric and women-centric design alone. Ms. Gurumurthy summed up this argument when she said, "It [community informatics] is not only about information and designing information systems, but about the politics and power of information itself. Hence community informatics is more about the fundamental issue of how we position the new technologies and their systems in

highly stratified contexts where the community is not a homogeneous entity." This is clearly reflective of a natural and necessary entry point for gender advocates, and by placing gender squarely within the redefinition of grassroots I&C processes, the workshop explored possibilities for women's appropriation and control of contextual informatics theory and practice.

Community informatics changes at the grassroots have generally been driven through donor funded ICT projects. The presentations in the second session highlighted the reality of these projects in terms of their excessive focus on financial sustainability, which has serious implications on the direction of the implementation process and for women's involvement. Ms. Vemraju said, "Women entrepreneurs are set up, but this model [of financial sustainability] leaves out the majority of disadvantaged women for whom the project was actually initiated. On the other hand, once women own the process, they find a new kind of self worth and their own perception and that of the community changes." Sustainability of ICT initiatives therefore needs to be reinterpreted as women's ownership, which is a slow and gradual process and necessitates implementation that is conscious of these conditions.

For any community informatics process, the social and political context of implementation assumes importance in light of the established value laden nature of the technological intervention. Social realities direct the course of any informatics process; caste, gender and local power dynamics play a critical role in determining the progress of a project, as well as determining the participation from marginalised communities. Ms. Mridula Swamy reflected on this reality when she said, "Dealing with the elites in the community is a central part of the process [Mahiti Manthana project]. We're trying to work with the women so that the telecentre is owned by the women, but is viewed as a community space. It's an extremely contextual and political issue, which is why things take so long." Additionally, a project may even fail to take off for lack of political will at the implementation level. For instance, in a HISP experience recounted by Dr. Zubeeda Quraishy, "Grassroots users enjoyed using the DHIS, but the higher authorities did not appreciate the precision and increased need for accountability. They refused to provide support to the programme." The political ground realities often decide the course of a project, and empowerment of the marginalised cannot be effective without sensitivity in design and implementation.

Introduction of community informatics within a local setting establishes ICTs as a node of power within the community, and because of heterogeneities at the community level, power conflicts begin to emerge around this central node. Additionally as a result of these heterogeneities, a single ICT project cannot address the articulated needs of all groups. New technologies are, by definition, disruptive, especially at the structural levels, but the empowering potential of ICTs in the community context is well established. Ms. Swamy reflected on the Mahiti Manthana project experience where, "ICTs are enabling power shifts that revamp village information processes through new routes of inclusion, empowerment and citizenship for women." Navigating these power conflicts is a challenge for progressive developmental politics - specifically gender politics - in any dynamics on community informatics.

In all the projects that were shared at the sessions, experiences show that women understand the process of knowledge creation, and control over content empowers to meet the spate of invasion by external information sources. New ICTs also introduce different ways to understand existing information at the community level, in ways that have not been explored earlier. Ms. Vemraju noted, "In our experience, we find that appropriation of technology is more related to content than access to the technology itself. Most of the time energies go into investing into the technology, and then there is no contextual content that pulls and holds the community together." Similarly, Ms. Mayberry expressed that the best content is created by and for the community. Mr. Parminder Jeet Singh expressed the opinion that by idealising bottom-up processes in comparison to externally mediated ones at the community level, the value of outside input remains inaccessible to the community. He said, "A simple video on issues coming from the state or national level would be useful and that

content should also be given the same value. The process of appropriation should be in the community's control, but we shouldn't deny the legitimacy or importance of external content." Therefore content sharing becomes an imperative in a climate where both community created and external content has substantive value, and this happens through the creation of platforms where people share content freely across projects and across layers.

Politics around knowledge creation

Knowledge production is not without its own set of politics, and it is a feminist challenge to engage with the politics of community informatics related changes, and not just participate at the design and implementation levels. An emergent concept was the ways in which ICTs work at the community level in the immediate context of women and how practitioners and researchers can engage with this. As Ms. Vemraju aptly said, "ICT projects that impact gender relations have been good, bad and ugly." The imperative of engaging with the politics of knowledge and content creation in ways that are sensitive to gender debates was asserted.

The focus of the workshop reflected on the politics of knowledge creation from the researcher's vantage, as well as from that of the project implementer. Important questions considered include who produces knowledge, how it gets produced and for what purposes. Dr. Ewa Gunnarsson's presentation captured the essence of combining the action research tradition with the gender research tradition. She emphasised "...the need to move into an inclusive and extended arena for knowledge production, where the researcher should work closely with participants and practitioners to get different inputs." In the creation of knowledge, researchers should be facilitators and participate in the co-formulation of the research question along with grassroots stakeholders. Mr. Singh cautioned that the use of concepts like 'gender contract' imply normative agenda setting, as decided by those that use and employ the concept. Therefore, the important point to consider in knowledge production is that of whose norms are in place; whether that of the researcher or of the practitioner. Further, the ways in which these normative relationships can be negotiated within the information society setting must be addressed. He said, "How do you deal with power relationships and the strong social dimensions linked to these power relationships? These power relationships exist between researcher and participant, as well as those between the practitioner and researcher."

Clearly, there are two modes of knowledge production – at the researcher level, and at the field level, both of which need to be synergised. Field level knowledge can be dictated by authorities, or produced in a manner that is community owned and operated. For instance, Ms. Swamy said, "The real empowerment possibilities for the communities lies in their participation in collection of information from households in key areas like health and education, which then serves as a platform for monitoring the provisions of public institutions." However, at the field level, there is a politics of knowledge that has a lot of influence over the way in which we address gender and ICTs. Dr. Quraishy's experience belies the optimism of community processes due to the recognition that they are situated in larger political and institutional settings. In her work, the lack of political will negated the efforts of communities in generating accurate information, but more importantly, this experience signifies the disruption that is caused to entrenched patriarchal norms and processes by technology mediated knowledge production. Another important issue to consider from the practitioner's viewpoint is the problem of external agenda coming in and how they are tied with funding and other donor related factors.

The more contextualised, or local, a project, the more socially robust is the knowledge that it is likely to produce. ICT projects have been shown to extend or constrain women's space of action. For instance, the Sami project from Sweden, as shared by Dr. Maria Udén and Ms. Susanne Spik, served to extend the gendered space of action through Internet based communication, and also allowed the Sami women to contribute to knowledge production.

They were traditionally excluded from the creation of meaning, but their use of ICTs afforded these women an entry point and a safe space to participate in creation activities.

From her Indian experience, Ms. Dand argued that, "Women need to move from knowledge receivers to knowledge producers." In this respect, ICTs provide a way for women's inherent knowledge to come into the public sphere, thus transferring legitimacy and empowering possibilities. More significantly, as indigenous women become technology producers, it begins to turn systems on their head and signifies important entry points for gender equality and opportunities for sharing. For instance, Ms. Spik from the Sami community spoke about her experience with connectivity and the changes it brought to her life, "Often it is easy to believe that when living in such a huge area which has very few people that we don't have any history. But it's exactly the opposite. We have learnt as children that every mountain, stream, every little stone has its history. To be able to convey these histories, to transfer this to one's own children, gives it status and what we [women] say, means something."

Technically, the Internet medium allows for the circumventing of spatio-temporal barriers, and hence is suited to the Sami reindeer herder's lifestyle. In terms of social dynamics, Ms. Malin Lindberg said, "The systems [in the Sami project] give an insight of how cooperation amongst actors can produce innovations that are designed to meet the needs of users. This wouldn't have been detected if the innovation systems had been connected to traditional actors of the region – like the authorities, or technical institutes of universities." ICTs have the potential to reflect women's knowledge in innovative and empowering ways.

VIII. Summary of Key Points

The workshop was reflective of how technology is impacting gendered power relationships globally. Mr. Parminder Jeet Singh, in his concluding remarks, indicated that the organisers deliberately brought in people with divergent views. The workshop highlighted aspects and conflicting opinions about ICTs, reflected in the variety of terminology used, similar to the naming issue brought up by Dr. Bonder. Speakers reflected on the need to submerge technology in the socio-historical realm, which is what happens by using words like techno-social systems, information society, and community informatics. There is a lack of clarity on the precise usage of these terms, but it is understood that new concepts are needed to engage with the new reality of the information society. For instance, a word like techno-social may not be well-received in development circles in India, but beginning to use the term will set in place the processes that are imperative for community empowerment objectives of technology. The workshop dealt with these issues of 'naming' in detail.

IT is bringing women into the workforce, which is transforming gender and relations, as also cultural norms for women like "curfew hours". The issues of IT as a work opportunity and what it does to gender equality, as well as that of women's engagement with the digital realm and how it changes things at social and psychological levels are both well studied. The workshop, in contrast, focused on how ICTs work at the community level in the immediate context of women, how realities are changing around women, and how practitioners and researchers can engage with that. The basic question addressed was what happens to women's appropriation of technology in community spaces. In that respect, community informatics is a useful concept to study how information systems in communities change with new technologies and how technologies impact gender relations.

The workshop brought up the issue of problematising the 'community' based on insights from practitioners dealing with community media. The heterogeneities within community is especially important in the discourse on gender equality. When community 'owns' media, it is not always clear who constitutes the 'community' and how relationships are negotiated in the community. Nevertheless most problems of women are situated within the community and because of this fact, 'demonising' external influences does not address more pertinent questions of women's marginalisation within their communities itself.

The debate on old and new technologies came up during the workshop. In this respect, the framing of a distinction between a paradigm and its artefacts is useful. New technologies – computing technologies and the Internet – constitute the technology paradigm. Community radio nowadays is possible because of the computer, since editing and recording are done digitally. Therefore, the categories of old and new technologies are not always justified.

The presentations focused on various forms of systemic interactions with state or external agencies that are not possible without information systems. For instance, Ms. Sejal Dand talked about people downloading information on the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGP) in India and displaying a printout up on a public wall for the whole community to see. Clearly, the paradigm is not about an old, illiterate woman sitting at the computer, which is our mental image of the ICT revolution, but about whether it is easier to go an information kiosk and download information, or go to a government office where male authorities exercise power, even if the office is nearby. The workshop emphasised that these systemic issues need to be highlighted when talking about ICTs today.

The workshop also explored new methods and frameworks of deconstructing what happens when ICTs are taken up by communities and by women. These reflections were shared in terms of changes in social processes, and the interfaces between technological and social systems. Once these processes are understood, they must inform project design and implementation. ICT interventions are a new kind of development intervention and the newly created systems need to understand it before directing and assessing change.

There are tremendous opportunities for change in gender relations the information society, but development interventions are not leveraging these opportunities for a host of reasons. The workshop made progress in the direction of framework building on gender and ICTs to fill in the gaps in this theorisation of information society. Neo-liberal conceptualisations have thus far dominated ICT frameworks, and by engaging with traditional development actors and gender activists, there is potential to create new frameworks for the study and implementation of gender sensitive community informatics processes and structures.

IX. Annexures

Annexure 1: Workshop Agenda

DAY 1: 5th FEBRUARY 2007	
8:15 - 9:00	Registration
9:00 - 9:10	Welcome - Anita Gurumurthy, India , IT for Change
9:10 - 9:20	Opening Remarks - Ewa Gunnarsson, Sweden , Professor and Head, Division of Gender, Technology and Organisation, Department of Human Work Sciences, Luleå University of Technology
<p>SESSION 1: Technology, Society and Gender in the Information Age</p> <p>The discussions in this session will critique the new context of the information society, explore how changes in the information age are impacting gender relations and examine emerging opportunities for gender-just change within the information society paradigm.</p>	
9:20 - 10:20	<p>Speakers:</p> <p>Gloria Bonder, Argentina - General Coordinator of the Regional UNESCO Chair Women, Science and Technology in Latin America</p> <p>Govind Kelkar, India - Programme Coordinator, IFAD-UNIFEM Gender Mainstreaming Programme in Asia</p> <p>Michael Gurstein, Canada - Executive Director, Centre for Community Informatics Research, Development and Training</p> <p>Chair - Ewa Gunnarsson, Sweden - Professor and Head, Division of Gender, Technology and Organisation, Department of Human Work Sciences, Luleå University of Technology</p>
10:20-10:50	Discussion
10:50-11:10	Tea & Coffee
<p>SESSION 2: Situating Gender in Community Informatics</p> <p>This session will explore whether and how the information and communications (I & C) architecture at the community level perpetuates gender inequalities and how new ICTs offer possibilities for structural shifts that impact existing gender relations. The session will examine how the new paradigms of interactivity, low</p>	

communication costs, information organising and access, asynchronous communication and other digital tools and applications can be used for developing contextual informatics – and how these changes can be directed to impact gender relations in positive ways. The session will analyse techno-social models and how they address women's appropriation of and control over technology.	
11:10 - 12:10	<p>Speakers:</p> <p>Jessica Mayberry, <i>India</i> - Founding Director, Video Volunteers Sejal Dand, <i>India</i> - Director, Area Networking and Development Initiatives Mridula Swamy, <i>India</i> - IT for Change</p> <p>Chair - Michael Gurstein, <i>Canada</i> - Executive Director, Centre for Community Informatics Research, Development and Training</p>
12:10 - 12:30	Discussion
12.30 - 13.30	LUNCH
13.30 - 14.30	<p>Speakers:</p> <p>Kanchan K. Malik, <i>India</i> - Lecturer, S. N. School of Communication, University of Hyderabad Zubeeda Quraishy, <i>India</i> - Researcher, University of Oslo & Project Coordinator, Health Information Systems Project Rukmini Vemraju, <i>India</i> - Programme Officer, Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia - Commonwealth of Learning</p> <p>Chair - Michael Gurstein, <i>Canada</i> - Executive Director, Centre for Community Informatics Research, Development and Training</p>
14:30 - 15:00	Discussion
15:00 - 15:20	Tea & Coffee
15:20 - 17:20	<p>Speakers:</p> <p>Maria Udén, <i>Sweden</i> - Post-Doctoral Researcher, Division of Gender, Technology and Organisation, Department of Human Work Sciences, Luleå University of Technology Malin Lindberg, <i>Sweden</i> - PhD Student, Division of Gender, Technology and Organisation, Department of Human Work Sciences, Luleå University of Technology Susanne Spik, <i>Sweden</i> - Head, Communication Platform Sirges Håkan Alm, <i>Sweden</i> - Head, Division of Engineering Psychology, Department of Human Work Sciences, Luleå University of Technology Ulf Mellström, <i>Sweden</i> - Professor, Division of Gender, Technology and Organisation, Department of Human Work Sciences, Luleå University of Technology</p>

17:20 - 17:50	<p>Caroline Wamala, Sweden - PhD Student, Division of Gender, Technology and Organisation, Department of Human Work Sciences, Luleå University of Technology</p> <p>Chair - Sujata Gothoskar, India - Education Coordinator, International Union of Food Workers</p> <p>Discussion</p>
DAY 2: 6th FEBRUARY 2007	
SESSION 3: Interactive Research Frameworks – Approaching Gender in Community Informatics	
9:30 - 10:30	<p>Speakers:</p> <p>Ewa Gunnarsson, Sweden - Professor and Head, Division of Gender, Technology and Organisation, Department of Human Work Sciences, Luleå University of Technology</p> <p>Presentation 1 - Interactive research approach in science in general and researcher-participant relations in interactive and democratic research processes, in particular</p> <p>Anita Gurumurthy, India - IT for Change</p> <p>Presentation 2 - Applying the information society lens to gender and development – some emerging concepts</p> <p>Chair - Gloria Bonder, Argentina - General Coordinator of the Regional UNESCO Chair Women, Science and Technology in Latin America</p>
10:30 - 11:00	Discussion
11:00 - 11:20	Tea & Coffee
<p>SESSION 4: Framing Feminist Engagements in the Information Society - from Local to Global</p> <p>Commenting on the discussions and presentations over the two days, the session will flag:</p> <p>a) critical factors shaping gender-related outcomes in community-based project and research design.</p> <p>b) strategic issues for feminist action that straddle the micro-macro spectrum.</p>	
11.20 - 13:00	<p>Commentators:</p> <p>Sujata Gothoskar, India - Education Coordinator, International Union of Food Workers</p>

	<p>Ulf Mellström, <i>Sweden</i> - Professor, Division of Gender, Technology and Organisation, Department of Human Work Sciences, Luleå University of Technology</p> <p>Vinod Pavarala, <i>India</i> - Professor, S.N. School of Communication, University of Hyderabad</p> <p>Gloria Bonder, <i>Argentina</i> - General Coordinator of the Regional UNESCO Chair Women, Science and Technology in Latin America</p> <p>Parminder Jeet Singh, <i>India</i> - IT for Change</p> <p>Chair - Rukmini Vemraju, <i>India</i> - Programme Officer, Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia - Commonwealth of Learning</p>
13:00 - 14:00	LUNCH
<p>SESSION 5: Open Discussion on the gender related concepts and frameworks informing and emerging from ICT project and interactive research designs.</p>	
14:00 – 15:30	<p>Moderators –</p> <p>Ewa Gunnarsson, <i>Sweden</i>, Professor and Head, Division of Gender, Technology and Organisation, Department of Human Work Sciences, Luleå University of Technology</p> <p>Anita Gurumurthy, <i>India</i>, IT for Change</p>

Annexure 2: List of Participants

1. Ms. Anita Gurumurthy
Executive Director
IT for Change
Bangalore, India
2. Ms. Ann-Christine Haupt
Media Producer
Luleå University of Technology
Luleå, Sweden
3. Ms. Caroline Wamala
PhD Student
Division of Gender, Technology and
Organisation
Department of Human Work Sciences
Luleå University of Technology
Luleå, Sweden
4. Dr. Ewa Gunnarsson
Professor, Institution of Work
Sciences and
Head Gender, Technology and
Organisation
Luleå University of Technology
Luleå, Sweden
5. Ms. Geetha Bhardwaj
Partnerships Coordinator
OneWorld South Asia
New Delhi, India
6. Dr. Gloria Bonder
General Coordinator of the Regional
UNESCO Chair Women, Science and
Technology in Latin America
Argentina
7. Dr. Govind Kelkar
Programme Coordinator
IFAD-UNIFEM Gender Mainstreaming
Programme in Asia
New Delhi, India
8. Dr. Håkan Alm
Head, Division of Engineering
Psychology
Department of Human Work Sciences
Luleå University of Technology
Luleå, Sweden
9. Ms. Jessica Mayberry
Founding Director
Video Volunteers
Ahmedabad, India
10. Dr. Kanchan K. Malik
Lecturer
S. N. School of Communication
University of Hyderabad
Hyderabad, India
11. Ms. Malin Lindberg
PhD Student
Division of Gender, Technology and
Organisation
Department of Human Work Sciences
Luleå University of Technology
Luleå, Sweden
12. Dr. Maria Udén
Post-Doctoral Researcher
Division of Gender, Technology and
Organisation
Department of Human Work Sciences
Luleå University of Technology
Luleå, Sweden
13. Ms. Meera Pillai
The Institute of Social Studies Trust
Bangalore, India
14. Dr. Michael Gurstein
Executive Director
Centre for Community Informatics
Research, Development and Training
Vancouver, Canada
15. Ms. Mridula Swamy
IT for Change
Bangalore, India
16. Mr. Parminder Jeet Singh
Executive Director
Bangalore, India

17. Ms. Rukmini Vemraju
Programme Officer,
Commonwealth Educational Media
Centre for Asia - Commonwealth of
Learning
New Delhi, India
18. Ms. Sejal Dand
Director,
Area Networking and Development
Initiatives
Ahmedabad, India
19. Ms. Sonya Thimmaiah
The Institute of Social Studies Trust
Bangalore, India
20. Ms. Sujata Gothoskar
Education Coordinator
International Union of Food Workers
New Delhi, India
21. Ms. Susanne Spik
Head
Communication Platform Sirges
Jokkmokk, Sweden
22. Dr. Ulf Mellström
Professor
Division of Gender, Technology and
Organisation,
Department of Human Work
Sciences
Luleå University of Technology
Luleå, Sweden
23. Dr. Vinod Pavarala
Professor
S.N. School of Communication
University of Hyderabad
Hyderabad, India
24. Zubeeda Quraishy
Project Coordinator
Health Information Systems Project
Chennai, India

About IT for Change

IT for Change (ITfC) is a non-profit organisation based in India.

ITfC seeks to interpret the context and the opportunity of the new ICTs, and broadly, the emerging information society, through the lens of the global South. Our approach is guided by the ethical cornerstones of development – equity, social justice and empowerment.

We strongly believe in the need to emphasise the political narratives that are often sidelined in debates on the information society, which is largely being shaped by neo-liberal ideologies.

ITfC engages in research and advocacy, and field based projects that demonstrate innovative ICT possibilities.

For more information, please visit www.ITforChange.net

Contact us at:

House No 393, 17th Main Road
35th Cross, Jayanagar 4th 'T' Block
Bangalore
Karnataka – 560041, India
Tel: +91 80 2665 4134/2653 6890
TeleFax: +91 80 4146 1055
Email: [ITfC\(at\)ITforChange\(dot\)net](mailto:ITfC(at)ITforChange(dot)net)