

Strategy meeting on

A Systemic Response to
Gender-based
Cyberviolence
27 August 2019

New Delhi

Organisers

IT for Change

Indian Police Foundation

with support from

UN Women

Web Foundation

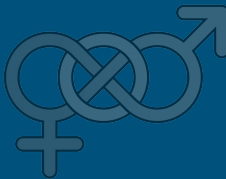
Why this meeting?

↑Gender-based cyberviolence is a **national crisis** today, affecting women across a variety of socio-structural locations.

↑New forms of rights violations in digitally-mediated spaces **are not adequately** understood or acknowledged by society and its institutions, including the law.

↑A proactive **feminist response is urgently needed** to tackle sexism, misogyny and gender-based violence, in digital sociality.

↑We need to a) take stock of women's experiences, b) unpack existing categories informing our understanding of the phenomenon, and c) map the knowledge gaps we need to fill.



The context and the frame

- ↑ A society-wide response to online GBV seems to be urgently needed for **deep cultural shift**. Institutional norms and rules need to be revisited.
- ↑ Even though law is only a partial solution, the absence of a robust legal framework in respect of gender-based cyberviolence presents the risk of dilution of rights for the new generation of internet users.
- ↑ **Recourse to the law is fraught with challenges**; from jurisdictional challenges to the lack of provisions for misogynistic speech, the path to justice is not easy.
- ↑ Historical gains to women's participation in the public sphere are at digital crossroads today. Platform companies must be accountable for rights violations women face online. FB and Twitter have their own **content governance systems**. The government is also coming up with new **intermediary liability guidelines**. Feminists need to engage with these developments.



A backgrounder to this conversation

↑IT for Change's multi-site research study in India on cyberviolence, which included a survey with 869 young women, reflects:

- the pervasive nature of gender-based cyberviolence
- new transgressions on women's bodies and selves
- a re-socialisation of gender relations; how misogyny in digital spaces is legitimate and women are forced to adapt to a new gender conservatism.
- the inadequacy of laws and institutional procedures.

Tabling the findings of the research, we hope to galvanise a discussion, focussing on how digital sociality can afford women the freedom to self express without the threat of violence.



Agenda

What are the gaps in the legal framework, especially in respect of sexist and misogynistic speech? What is the role of the law in upholding women's freedoms online?

How can we build an informed feminist stance on techno-governance and content governance?

What are the measures being adopted by social media companies to respond to sexism and misogyny? What do we need to do to make platforms more accountable?

What are current feminist responses to build gender transformative cultures in digital sociality?



Who is participating

Officials from
MWCD

Officials from IT
Ministry

Women's rights
organisations

Lawyers handling
cyber violence
cases

Law enforcement
agencies

Feminist media

Academics and
researchers

Groups working on
sexuality and
gender identity

Members of ICCs

Platform
companies



Programme Details

Where?

We the People Hall, UN Women MCO for India, Bhutan, Maldives and Sri Lanka, UN House, 55, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi 110003

When?

27th August 2019, 9.30 am to 5.30 pm

