A Gender Framework for Analysis of ICTD Projects in India

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The presentation attempts to bring together a gendered analysis of rural telecentres as well as a critique of national ICT policy frameworks in an attempt to understand a) what kinds of ICT for Development (ICTD) approaches contribute towards a social transformation process that meets the goal of the gender equality and b) what measures are required at the national level for the principles of a gender transformatory approach to translate into policy action, in order to result in sustainable outcomes for gender equality.[1]

India is home to a plethora of ICTD projects. In fact, the Digital Dividend report from 2004 reveals that of the thousand ICTD projects in their database, those from Asia constitute 36 percent of the total and within this, those from India account for 60 percent of the total.[2] India thus has the highest concentration of ICTD projects in all developing countries that focus on a wide range of activities including education, training, employability, e-governance, sustainable livelihoods, access to health services, and so on. Interestingly, a relatively high percentage of telecentre-based initiatives state 'women's empowerment' as one of the major activities.[3]

ICTD and Women's Empowerment

So what kind of women's empowerment are we talking about in the ICTD arena or even broadly in the information society age? Revisiting the concept as it was conceived by gender activists in the 80s and 90s, the power *to*, *with* and *within*, are central in understanding how women as individuals and as collectives can mediate and challenge those structures and institutions that reinforce their unequal position in society.[4] While recognising the role of education, training, job opportunities outside the home, earning an income, and other such enabling factors – all of which may bring new status and identity to women and improve their bargaining power within and beyond the household – feminist activists have also advocated a politicised approach that involves the assertion of demands by women for their rightful entitlements from the state.[5] This coupled with the transformation of institutional structures in ways that are responsive and accountable to women's demands, is necessary to bring about sustained institutional change.[6]

In the recent wave of neo-liberalisation and marketisation, however, empowerment has acquired a watered-down definition in the development discourse wherein it is seen as an individualised and de-politicised process that is valued purely in terms of economic outcomes. Oxaal and

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[1] The arguments and findings of this presentation come from a larger research study of IT for Change that examines different types of ICTD projects in India in terms of their impact on gender equality. The fieldwork for this study, commissioned by the National Institute for Smart Government, was undertaken in February and March 2007, and the results will be shared in August 2007. This presentation also takes from the ongoing qualitative research underlying Mahiti Manthana – a field project of IT for Change – in which an integrated ICT strategy has been established within a grassroots women's movement in order to help them reach their empowerment goals more effectively.

[2] Paul J, Katz R and Gallagher S 2004, 'Lessons from the field: An overview of the current uses of information and communication technologies for development', *Digital Dividend Report,* accessed on May 15, 2007 from: http://www.digitaldividend.org/pdf/lessons.pdf

[3] *ibid.*

[4] Oxaal Z and Baden S 1997, Gender and empowerment: definitions, approaches and implications for policy, *BRIDGE Report No. 40*, pp.1-33.

[5] Rao A and Kelleher D 2005, Is there life after gender mainstreaming, *Gender and Development*, Vol 13 (2), pp.57-69.

[6] *ibid.*

Baden, taking from Young (1993), note, "empowerment is often envisaged as individual rather than as collective, and focused on entrepreneurship and individual self-reliance, rather than on co-operation to challenge power structures which subordinate women… fit[ting] together with the belief in entrepreneurial capitalism and market forces as the main saviours of sickly or backward economies, and with the current trend for limiting state provision of welfare, services and employment" (1997, p5). Without discounting the importance of access to markets and to decent income-earning opportunities as one of the fundamental conditions for women's well-being, it is critical to engage with the realm of institutional transformation, if gains in the economic sphere are to translate into other spheres of society. Rao and Kelleher sum this up, asserting that, "…change strategies should envision *institutional* change. This does not mean reducing programmes such as those focused on education or women's entrepreneurship. It means seeing these not as ends in themselves, but as means to equality. Institutional change requires political activity to translate education or improved health care into equality" (2005, p64).

Bringing this back to the information society context, it is observed that of the several hundreds of ICTD projects that exist in India, some adopt a market-oriented approach, believing that ICTs strengthen access to markets (such as agricultural markets) by reducing information asymmetries, transaction costs and time and increasing efficiency levels, thus enhancing economic outcomes for all sections of the populations. An extension of this approach is when ICTs are adopted into development institutions, including government sectors, with similar assumptions as elucidated in the first type. Here, citizens are expected to benefit through better access and availability of services, reduced time and effort, lower costs, more accurate information, and so on. E-government services come under this ambit. The third approach is more community-centred, and is where development actors (state or private actors) who are already engaged in the areas of education, health, livelihoods, agriculture, social security and water and sanitation, see ICTs as a means to better achieve their development goals. They may, for instance, use videos to provide information on women's health or facilitate discussion among adolescent girls on menstruation; they may make available easily understandable information on key legal problems like property disputes, and methods to take action at telecentres; or may offer tele-medicine facilities so that communities can avail the services of specialised health practitioners or veterinary doctors directly from their villages. The final approach is one which sees ICTs as a new and revolutionary technology paradigm that is reconstituting social and economic relationships – and so, can be used as a new strategy to address equity concerns and the rights of marginalised groups by shifting power relationships in their favour.

These four approaches may be seen as useful typologies in research on gender issues and also constitute a framework to approach policy and project design. They are summarised below:

1 ICTs as a vehicle for market extension.
2 ICTs as efficiency enhancing tools for development institutions, including that of the government.
3 ICTs as community-centred development tools that can be used to specifically address education, health, livelihoods, agriculture and other goals.

4 ICTs as a new strategy for empowerment that can shift social power relationships and facilitate institutional transformation towards the realisation of rights of marginalised groups.

It is important to note at this point that gender perspectives can vary significantly in development projects. Some projects may adopt a gender 'neutral' approach, not perceiving any discernable implications for women through new technologies. Other projects which have a gender focus, may target women as 'beneficiaries', may seek to address women's needs within the broader ICT strategy, or may promote women's strategic access to information, communication and knowledge sharing opportunities. Some projects may specifically seek to elicit empowering outcomes for women that promote their access to, and control over, public and private resources, information, membership in networks and contacts with government officials – ultimately creating a positive spiral that results in transformed gender roles and relationships, greater autonomy, access, participation, control and bargaining power.

Within the above typology of ICTD projects then, gender outcomes can take several paths. On the one hand, a governance reform initiative that focuses on public redressal may create new empowering outcomes for women through new networks and contacts established with public officials; or, a market-extension programme using ICTs can aid women producers if it targets agricultural activities that are dominated by women. On the other, a community-centred health strategy that uses VCDs, tele-medicine-based linkages, and computer-based information, may in fact be indifferent to gender concerns if it does not specifically address issues such as women's access to public spaces, taboos around women's reproductive health, and so on.

The extent to which gender equal outcomes can be obtained in an ICT initiative depends most critically on what is sought to be achieved from a gender standpoint and how the gender opportunity is integrated within fundamental ICTD approaches.

What emerges is that initiatives under the first three ICT typologies may achieve significant gains for women, through e-literacy programmes; capacity building and developing job skills such as data entry or desktop publishing; clear and transparent application processes for certificates and entitlements such as ration card, birth certificate or gas connection; access to accurate health and legal information, and so on. Moreover, these initiatives may even have positive spillovers in other spheres of women's lives, empowering women to confront gender inequalities embodied within practices of dowry, child marriage and alcoholism. That said, in the absence of an explicit institutional change agenda (as stated by Rao and Kelleher), these approaches may remain as efforts that tinker with the 'means' without achieving the ultimate 'end' of gender equality. The real potential for transformation, therefore, lies in the fourth approach, and it is within this space that gender concerns need to be defined and pushed, to strategically change power relations and achieve positive outcomes for women.

This presentation attempts to use the case study of Mahiti Manthana to examine how such a strategic approach to gender in ICTD projects can unfold.

Mahiti Manthana within the ICTD Typologies

Mahiti Manthana, a project of IT for Change, is situated within an existing development intervention called Mahila Samakhya, a project of the Government of India that empowers socially and economically disadvantaged women in rural areas through the formation of collectives (or *sanghas*). Within the Mahiti Manthana project, the attempt is to develop a comprehensive ICT-based resource support strategy that feeds into the existing activities and processes of the *sangha* women and their federations. The project uses a multi-pronged ICT approach, adopting community radio, locally-made videos and rural telecentres as its main technology platforms. Each component is described briefly below.[7]

The **community radio** component acts as a platform for providing information and expert guidance in order to build knowledge on key development issues. *Sangha* women use the information on the broadcast to facilitate discussions and develop their own perspectives on such issues. It also acts as a space for them to voice their opinions, share their talents and engage in peer learning as they assert their identities as *sangha* women. Mahila Samakhya staff 'piggy-back' on this platform in order to disseminate organisational information relating to current and future events and activities. The idea of the radio programme is to build on the collective identity of the Mahila Samakhya movement across geographically dispersed *sanghas*, while providing vital information that *sangha* women can use in their lives. The radio component also attempts to engender the public sphere. The weekly broadcast raises questions relating to gender that are becoming part of what may be seen as public consciousness. Not just *sangha* women, but women and men from all spheres of society listen to this programme that represents the collective struggles and aspirations of women on their journey towards empowerment.

The **video component** focuses on creating relevant, inexpensive and quickly-made videos. The content for the videos is developed by mapping out the information and communication processes of Mahila Samakhya and using a range of formats that best suit their functioning and objectives. Videos may be used as stand-alone training tools, as a medium of self-expression, as a mechanism for identity building, as a peer-to-peer communication platform, and as an archive of organisational processes. The relevance of video in this context is very high, as more than 90 percent of the *sangha* women have never attended school. Print- or text-based information, which continues to constitute the dominant media platform today, remains out of the reach of these women. Thus, video fills their 'thirst' for knowledge by serving as a resource around which independent, self-driven learning can occur. This is facilitated through the concept of a ***sangha-shaale***, or a 'women's collective classroom', wherein women learners can choose the time, method and subject of learning. This represents a new, flexible and viable institutional form of bridging the knowledge gap for adult women. The learning process does not rely on the presence of resource experts or trainers, but uses help-sheets of 'how-to' information (read out by the literate members in the group) to create alternate learning methods for non-literate women. The content for the videos is generated through participatory exercises that capture both demand-led issues – what rural women want – and supply-led issues – what the Mahila Samakhya organisational priority determines.

[7] For a comprehensive understanding of the Mahiti Manthana project and for further details each of the components, visit the website at: http://www.itforchange.net/itfc_projects/mahiti_manthana/

Namma Mahiti Kendras (NMKs), or 'Our Information Centres' address the information needs of the *sangha* women and the broader community. While these telecentre spaces provide basic technology-oriented and revenue-generating services like computer education, data entry, browsing, Desk Top Publishing (DTP), and so on, the real empowerment possibilities lie in their ability to create networks with public officials and departments; facilitate bottom-up community involvement through community data collection processes that capture household information on health, education and entitlements; and, use this community information to help service providers better target their interventions as well as to generate accountability by verifying the collected data against the actual interventions entered by these officials in public records using the Right to Information Act.

Some salient aspects of Mahiti Manthana that contribute towards its representation as the fourth typology are detailed below.

Ownership, participation and control

- An important element in the project is that the telecentre space is owned by *sangha* women. Acquiring the space is a journey of negotiation, assertion, agency and claims, wherein *sangha* women as a collective, bargain with local officials and elites, dominant caste members, and department representatives to obtain the space, the electricity collection and the telephone/Internet connection. This is significant in a context where women's mobility outside the village is relatively low; their interaction with those in positions of power is heavily circumscribed by patriarchal and feudal conditions; and ownership of assets, individual or collective, among *sangha* women is extremely rare. And so, a collective space, owned and run by the *sangha,* brings new forms of visibility and status.

- Ownership of the space is not determined based on which individual is best able to afford the infrastructure, space and equipment costs and is best capable of managing the telecentre. These criteria, which tend to be used often in telecentre projects in India that embrace the first three approaches, inevitably ensure that the educated son (or maybe daughter) of the landowning village elite gets selected to run the centre, and by consequence, weakens the participation of the poorest, most marginalised sections of the community. Instead, in Mahiti Manthana, a deliberate emphasis is placed on the *sangha's* collective ownership of the NMKs, where all critical decisions relating to the centre are made by a management committee – relating to what kinds of services and at what charges (for those which are paid), purchase of all items used at the centre, selection of the *sakhi* (or operator) who runs the telecentre, monitoring of the *sakhi*'s activities, and supporting her in networking with officials and local self-government representatives. Thus, *sangha* women become important information nodes within the village and their networks with external agencies create new identities for them within the village system.[8] While acknowledging that these processes are time-consuming

[8] During a *Janasamparka* programme, in which senior officials from each government department in the state of Karnataka interact with the village locals, listen to their problems, and report these to the senior administrators, an official visited Attiguppe village. As soon as he entered the village, he first greeted Usha, the *Mahiti Kendra* S*akhi* of Attiguppe, and then the Management Committee members. After this, he visited the other village leaders. Once the official left, the villagers were curious about how all the officials knew Usha so well. They were told that it was because of her frequent visits to their offices at the *Taluk* level

and require significant investment in resources and capacity building, it is important to note that they are *non-negotiable* elements in an ICTD project that attempts to challenge hierarchical power structures in favour of creating new opportunities for women – structures that undermine the status quo and create transformatory spaces.

- As NMKs are the space where radio broadcasts are listened to and videos are viewed, it acquires critical value as a space within which *sangha* women can discuss issues, provide support, share opinions, disagree, argue and debate, and thus build their perspectives on development issues as well as their collective identity as a *sangha*. By creating a new information culture in the rural context, NMKs achieve new breakthroughs in how women define strategies for change. In this process, information-based lobbying, planning and negotiating get gradually democratised within the Mahila Samakhya system and move out of centralised zones at the federation level into decentralised village peripheries.

Collective empowerment over individual empowerment

- As noted in the earlier section, empowerment in its interpretation as an individual, and largely economic phenomenon, limits the possibilities that ICTs hold to challenge social relationships and create new meanings. In Mahiti Manthana, the emphasis is completely on *collective processes* – collective listening to the radio broadcasts, collective viewing of videos at the *sangha-shaale* (followed by group discussion based on the help-sheets), and collective monitoring of the telecentre and community-extension processes.

- The gains achieved through this emphasis would be *much* different in an individual emphasis. For instance, if *sangha* women were to individually listen to a broadcast on domestic violence or child marriage in their households, they may at most internalise the messages. But, in a collective forum, the space is created for women to discuss the issue together based on their local situations. It gives them the power to collectively agree or disagree based on the issue and develop the initiative to challenge or change unfair gender practices in their contexts. Similarly so with video. In the case of telecentres, individual women may benefit significantly through capacity building, the availability of information on agriculture, or even through the individual management of a key space like a telecentre. Yet, the impact in terms of visibility, responsibility and legitimacy that collective ownership brings with it cannot be achieved to the same degree in an individual-oriented change process. These measures create positive spirals in reinforcing the unified identity of a *sangha* within a stratified societal context that has oppressed people based on caste, class and gender.

- Participation, within this understanding, goes beyond women as 'users' of technology or 'consumers' of ICT services. The way in which technology is seen, used, constructed, valued, appropriated, and ultimately, owned, depends critically on a recognition of the fact that users and consumers are not undifferentiated groups of people, but are highly heterogeneous, with power relations determining which *kinds* of users and consumers will ultimately access services. The project therefore pushes for collective participation in the ownership of

(sub-district level) and her interactions with them. This earned her a place of respect in the external eyes of the community.

technology, wherein the specific needs and issues of disadvantaged women can be addressed so that they can use ICTs to realise their rights.

Bottom-up knowledge with concomitant development of new systems and 'external' linkages

- While promoting women's access to and use of new technology platforms as a means to express their views and perspectives, the project also prioritises external knowledge and guidance on key development issues. Often, there is an inherent belief in ICTD projects that new technologies must be used purely to revive and preserve indigenous traditions and knowledge, without any external biases and ideas. Yet, it is easily forgotten that urban, middle-class individuals are creatures of external knowledge inputs – right from the use of textbooks in classrooms to the current use of the Internet to 'Google' information on any and every issue. In the *sangha* women's case, the lack of literacy skills further cuts them away from mainstream sources of information. It is in this context that radio broadcasts, video programmes and computer-based modules can fill the knowledge gap and provide women with new material and resources on key development topics such as legal rights, political participation, maternal health, education, self-reliance, democracy and many other areas, upon which *sangha* women can then build their opinions and knowledge. Thus, the project demonstrates the value of finding the right balance between those processes that affirm local knowledge and those that promote access to information and debates that are 'external'.

Creating value for new technologies without exclusive reliance on demand-driven strategies

- There has typically been much stress on promoting a demand-driven strategy wherein it is assumed that ICTs are 'out there' and available and so, community members, who have complete awareness of the utility and values of these technologies, would just need to 'plug into' them in order to reap their benefits. This assumption is weak on two grounds. First, the technology is not 'out there'. Software and hardware in their current formats are designed to meet the business needs of developed countries, and definitely do not take into account the needs of poor, non-literate, non-English speaking women in developing countries. Second, the poor in rural communities do not currently perceive value in new technology options and do not believe (rightly so) that these technologies will change their lives.

- In Mahiti Manthana, the goal is to build technology platforms not as ends in and of themselves, but as means to achieve those ends defined by women in the community. The idea is explore the transformative possibilities of new technologies vis-à-vis their effectiveness and appropriateness in meeting *sangha* women's priorities and solving their problems. While the English, text-dominated Internet by itself carries little value to *sangha* women, the use of the Internet by them to engage in video conferencing with government officials in district headquarters on different schemes, or with a city doctor to discuss an ailment, or even with the *sangha* women in the neighbouring village to discuss and share ideas, creates opportunities to build new relationships that can alter the existing power hierarchies. Similarly, with video, the idea is not to have a trained filmmaker travel into

villages and make documentary films on their issues, but to enable fieldworkers and eventually women themselves to simply go into a village and engage *sangha* women in dialogue on a development topic or capture an expert discussing a topic at a district meeting. This content is then made widely available at the *sangha-shaale*, taking advantage of the minimal cost of burning CDs. The video-making process does not end with this, since new perspectives of *sangha* women, which may validate or reject the earlier content, can be captured in an iterative manner, as women collectively view the videos in other villages.

- The point is that in their current construction, these technologies are completely alien to women's realities, and through this project, the attempt is to create value for them by plugging directly into their lives without over-hyping the technology aspect.[9] Only when contextualised ICT interventions are evolved, and the value of the technologies is demonstrated over a sustained period of time, will they generate demand from poor women. Towards this end, it may be useful to remember that 'demand' in itself, with new institutional paradigms like telecentres, needs to be problematised. Innovations around emerging techno-social systems may require the vision of mediating mechanisms (supply-side imperatives) like a project design led by an NGO or an intervention implemented by a district administration. Only when these innovations start to make sense in the existing social context can a virtuous cycle between supply and demand be observed and end users can begin to shape the techno-social system more actively.

Sustainability as community appropriation

- A very significant element of the project lies in the definition of sustainability. Several project proposals as well as evaluation studies in the ICTD arena define 'success' in terms of sustainability, which in itself is not problematic. However, sustainability has come to acquire a narrow, marketised angle – in terms of whether the telecentre is financially viable, whether it is offering enough services to break-even expenses each month and whether users pay for these services. This, albeit important, is only one part of the larger issue of sustainability. The problem arises when the need to create a plethora of content and services for telecentres leads to the development and prioritisation of those kinds of services that earn revenue and bring in larger proportions of the village population. Typically, this emphasis does not coincide with the needs of poor women, who tend to demand those services that fill their information and knowledge gaps and enable their communication and networking with external agencies.

    - In Mahiti Manthana, sustainability is understood from its community rooted-ness, along the lines of Sally Burch's conceptualisation of community information centres: "One of the major problems faced by this type of project is sustainability, both in economic terms as well as in social and cultural terms, particularly when communities do not feel that the information centre is their own. Speaking about sustainability goes beyond simply

[9] This path is well-proven in the case of literacy. None would deny the importance of literacy skills in enabling women to achieve other ends; yet, many studies have shown that literacy programmes that are distanced from women's immediate contexts and that do not find relevance in women's activities, will be unsuccessful, as women quickly lose the skills grasped during such programmes once they return to their regular lives.

financial considerations. The issue of sustainability is economic, as much as it is social and cultural. One of the keys to sustainability is through a true appropriation of the project and, thus, of the centre itself, on the part of the community" (2007, p15).[10]

- Accordingly, there is as much importance placed on the 'online' elements of developing content and making available services, timely information and useful resources at the telecentre as there is on the 'offline' component of building community ownership and stakeholdership in the running of the telecentres. The right mix of these two is essential to create the transformatory effects contained within ICTs. Building *sangha* women's centrality in the ownership and management of the telecentres, collection of community data, visits to government offices to gather village-relevant information and utilising the Right to Information Act to access rightful entitlements of community members – all of which are the focus at the *Namma Mahiti Kendras* – would be structurally impossible if the telecentres were positioned as revenue-oriented or if they attempt to charge a user fee for such services.

Going back to the four approaches to ICTs, it is ultimately a question of examining the concepts of ownership, participation, empowerment, value, sustainability and institutionalisation, within the ambit of the stated objectives of the project. Simply put, the empowerment strategies undertaken through an ICT initiative depend on the goals and objectives sought to be achieved through the project. Thus, where the goals in the first three approaches may be to increase acceptance of ICTs among women, train women in using ICTs, build women's capacities, entrepreneurship skills and networking opportunities, or increase women's access to ICT-based services, the existing conceptualisation of these principles with their emphasis on revenue-generation and financial viability may in fact be acceptable. Further, the policy elements necessary to support these goals may already exist in current national ICT policies. However, if the goal is in terms of gender power shifts and institutional change – contained in the fourth approach and illustrated through the Mahiti Manthana case study – then, not just the project design and framework discussed above, but also the policy ecology that can sustain this transformative agenda needs to be given sufficient attention. This is discussed in the final section.

Learnings from the Field Project and Ongoing Field-Research in terms of Policy Implications

An ICT policy ecology that would enable power shifts needs to move away from the dominant neo-liberal perception of ICTs and calls for a central role of the state in creating the 'opportunity structure' in which women's collectives can determine their needs and rights. The role of the state is not one of provisioning services to 'beneficiary' communities, but of creating the spaces and conditions that allow for gender transformation to take place. This goes beyond considerations of women-only hours or women-friendly spaces at the bottom level, or women's participation in decision-making bodies and policy spaces at the top level. It calls for looking at core ICT policy elements of connectivity, content and software, and determining what policy

[10] Burch S 2007, *Knowledge sharing for rural development: challenges, experiences and methods,* Agencia Latinoamericana de Información, Quito.

choices as well as what kinds of community-centred participation within each of these elements would enable power shifts to take place. These are discussed briefly below.

In terms of **software**, as mentioned earlier, national policy needs to move away from promoting pre-packaged tools and applications that are oriented to the North and create opportunities for local software developers to develop local language software based on the specific needs of the community. Open source platforms need to be embraced so that applications can be modified to suit the actual needs and uses of local people – which proprietary software obviously does not allow for.

Content development needs to be facilitated by the government through an opening up of spaces that promote democratic, collaborative and decentralised content production. This does not imply the pushing down of state-produced content but the creation of conditions in the policy architecture that can enable local communities, particularly women and disadvantaged groups in those communities, to produce, share and use information and knowledge in and through new technological platforms. This can involve many aspects – the availability of subsidised ICT literacy and skill training by the state; the provision of basic subsidised, affordable and ubiquitous technology infrastructure; the adoption of new licensing regimes that move away from closed and copyrighted ones; the development of new institutional mechanisms for content production and sharing specific to agriculture, local enterprises or other development domains; and so on.

Finally, it is imperative to move away form private-sector led **connectivity** paradigms, which ensure that poor, rural, disadvantaged sections remain isolated from accessing, using and seeing benefit in connecting to the outside world. As the Internet increasingly becomes the platform through which individuals negotiate with and communicate with the world, conduct personal, social, economic and even political activities, and learn, share, discuss and develop knowledge, it is vital that the poor and marginalised have ownership of and access to this critical resource. Yet, the irony is that on one side, UNESCO's Internet Manifesto guidelines calls for free Internet in public libraries and the proposal of the Swiss Agency for Development and Corporation (SDC) calls for free Internet in schools[11] – both of which are considered central institutions for the development of knowledge – while on the other side, there has been strong resistance to providing free Internet at telecentres, which are the platforms for knowledge provision and sharing in rural areas. Drawing from the Right to Education, which argues that education is a fundamental right for all citizens as it enables them to achieve other positive ends, the Internet needs to be similarly conceived so that its potential can be harnessed to facilitate institutional transformation and in particular, empower women, by creating new possibilities and choices.

In conclusion, for an ICT policy to be development-centred and gender-inclusive, its mandate cannot rest solely with the Information Technology Ministry. The technical expertise provided by representatives of this department is not sufficient to create the necessary transformatory possibilities underlying the fourth approach. It is critical that practitioners from traditional development sectors like health, education, agriculture, and so on, as well as representatives of

[11] See http://www.ifla.org/III/announce/announcment-IM-guidelines.htm and http://www.un-gaid.org/en/node/178 for more information on these proposals.

women's machineries be centrally involved in designing ICT policies, and have the space to articulate their sectoral priorities and needs, upon which then technical platforms can be shaped.