



Annual Report

2014-2015

OVERVIEW

IT for Change, an NGO located in Bengaluru, India, promotes innovative and effective use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for socio-economic change in the global south. Dominant ICTs for Development approaches tend to over-valorise technology. They bring ideologies of market fundamentalism to development, replacing the cornerstone ethics of participation, social justice and gender equality.

Progressive development sector actors, we believe, must come together to influence the techno-social changes redefining our societies. Therefore, we seek to build bridges across different sectors, for a global struggle towards an equitable information society. Our work in the areas of education, gender, governance, community informatics and Internet policy push the boundaries of existing vocabulary and practice, exploring new development frameworks.

IT for Change is in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

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Vision

A society in which digital technologies contribute to social justice and equality.

Mission

Democratising the control and use of digital technologies so that all individuals and communities are able to use them freely towards their empowerment.

Values

Equity, social justice, gender equality, democracy.

Strategies

Partnering with local communities, forging local and global networks, undertaking research, engaging with policy spaces, creating new institutional capacity.

DIRECTORS' NOTE

“ It was in the lap of the IT revolution that IT for Change was born – at the turn of the millennium, in Bengaluru, the city most associated with the IT phenomenon in the developing world. But we were born in rebellion, questioning the rhetoric of a digital utopia that was to automatically usher in prosperity for all. We were hardly Luddites, and so, took ICTs into our hands and began contributing towards an alternative imagination and practice. This in short, is the decade-long story of IT for Change.

Today, we find many more people standing by us, both from among those who earlier could see no fault with an ‘autonomous’ evolution of technologies, and those who considered them as a passing fad. IT for Change stands at the forefront of path-breaking contributions – concepts and ideas that guide research and policies in this new field.

This year, our unique model of ICTs in education in Karnataka state, which centres on teacher agency and collaboratively created content, drew appreciation from education departments across India. Two of them invited us to set up similar models in their states. There are very few examples of NGO initiated models receiving such quick and widespread acceptance among public sector actors.

We are leading a multi-country research on gendering e-government for the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific. We have also been commissioned to provide advisory oversight to World Wide Web Foundation’s 10-country research and policy advocacy initiative on *‘ICTs for Empowerment of Women and Girls’*.

Our field centre, *Prakriye*, continued to demonstrate the means to create an empowering culture of ICT use at the grassroots, testing out new techno-social innovations in community data and mobile-based local media.

In the hope of building a people’s movement, this year, we went from spearheading a global coalition on Internet justice and rights to beginning the process of holding an Internet Social Forum.

All these very different kinds of work are united at the base by our commitment to seeing the digital paradigm contribute to greater social justice and equity. We recognise the need for a sustained effort to democratise control over the digital space. The path no doubt is steep, and we are up against very strong forces consolidating their structural advantages. But we are up to the challenge.

”

Directors, IT for Change

ACRONYMS

ANANDI	Area Networking and Development Initiatives
AP-RCEM	Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism
BRICS	Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DSERT	Department of State Educational Research and Training
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
ICANN	Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IT	Information Technology
ITfC	IT for Change
IVRS	Interactive Voice Response System
JNC	Just Net Coalition
KMVS	<i>Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan</i>
KOER	Karnataka Open Educational Resources
MAKAAM	<i>Mahila Kisan Adhikaar Manch</i>
MIS	Management Information System
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OER	Open Educational Resources
RMSA	<i>Rashtriya Madhyamika Shiksha Abhiyan</i>
STF	Subject Teacher Forum
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WSF	World Social Forum
WWW	World Wide Web

OUR TEAM

Governing Board

President

Srilatha Batliwala
Scholar-Associate,
Association for Women's Rights in
Development

Secretary

Geetha Narayanan
Founder-Director,
Srishti School of Art, Design and
Technology

Treasurer

Gopakumar Thampi
Director, Economic Governance,
Asia Foundation

Members

Padma Sarangapani
Professor,
Tata Institute of Social Sciences

Dhanwanti Nayak
Independent Researcher

Associate members

Upendranadh C.
Asia Governance Coordinator,
ActionAid

Solomon Jayaprakash
Founder and CEO,
India Drivers Network (mGaadi)

Vijayabaskar M.
Associate Professor,
Madras Institute of Development Studies

Michael Gurstein
Executive Director,
Centre for Community Informatics
Research, Development and Training

Ex-officio members

Parminder Jeet Singh
Executive Director, IT for Change

Anita Gurumurthy
Executive Director, IT for Change

Gurumurthy Kasinathan
Director, IT for Change

At Bengaluru

Aditya K.	Project Intern (Education)
Akanksha Babbar	Research Assistant
Anita Gurumurthy	Executive Director
Anuja Venkatachalam	Research Intern
Ashok Pujari	Program Associate
Ashwini Morey	Office Manager and Secretary
Deepu Narayan R.	Project Leader - IT
Gurumurthy Kasinathan	Director
Lokesha	Project Assistant
Madhavi Gosukonda	Communications Manager
Maitreyi Karnoor	Program Associate
Manasa Priya Vasudevan	Research Assistant
Nandeesh M.	Project Assistant - IT

Nandini Chami	Senior Research Associate
Parminder Jeet Singh	Executive Director
Prasanna Kumar B. K.	Office Assistant
Radha Dasari	Program Assistant
Rakesh B.	Project Assistant - IT
Roshini Suparna Diwakar	Research Assistant
Sandeep P.	Senior Accounts Officer
Seema Kouser	Program Intern
Shariff K. Mulla	Project Assistant - IT
Sriranjani Ranganathan	Deputy Director
Sunil C.	Accounts Intern
Venkatesha T.	Program Associate
Yogesh K S.	Project Associate - IT

At Mysuru

Anupama Suresh	Senior Project Associate
Harisha N.	Senior Field Associate
Keerthiraj R.	Administrator and Accountant
Mangamma S.	Senior Field Associate
Radhamani	Field Associate
Sapthami P. K.	Field Associate
Shabharisha M.	Senior Tech Support

Shivamma N.	Senior Field Associate
Shreeja K.	Senior Field Associate
Somashekar U. T.	Field Associate
Suvarna H.C.	Senior Field Associate
Tilak Rajkumar N.	Driver and Office Assistant
Umesh Kuri	Junior Project Associate



EDUCATION

The focus of our work is on demonstrating models of technology integration for reforming and strengthening teacher education in the public school system. We believe technology should strengthen public institutions so that the vision of education of 'equitable quality' set out by the Indian Right to Education Act is realised.

OUR WORK THIS YEAR

Subject Teacher Forum

IT for Change's work has focussed on building institutional capacities of the public school system in the state of Karnataka, in India. The state level Subject Teacher Forum (STF) and Karnataka Open Educational Resources (KOER) programs, in partnership with state agencies (i.e. Department of State Educational Research and Training and *Rashtriya Madhyamika Shiksha Abhiyan*) and UNICEF, reached some important milestones this year.

The STF has built a community of teachers and teacher educators. It is perhaps the largest virtual professional learning community of teachers in the world belonging to a single education system. The virtual forums are emerging as spaces where teachers are sharing and critiquing processes in school education, thus taking a crucial step towards claiming their rightful role in the educational process. Teachers are collaborating to access, create and share Open Educational Resources (OERs) through the KOER wiki portal, which has had more than 2 million hits, over 2 years. In collaboration with the Commonwealth Educational Media Centre for Asia, we have been working with the District Institutes of Education and Training (teacher education institutions) across Karnataka state on integrating ICTs in teacher education, and for offering a course on 'ICT Mediation in teaching-learning' for their diploma in education. This has helped further institutionalise our work in Karnataka.

Our research on the STF and KOER program, as part of a research network supported by IDRC Canada, confirms our hypothesis that a teachers' professional community of learning can support effective models of contextual OERs creation, through participatory approaches employing free and open source software. This is quite in contrast to mainstream approaches to technology in education, which aim to reduce teachers' roles to that of minor technicians.

ITfC has strengthened teacher training in Karnataka, and supported workshops in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh. Its impact has been transformational – sustaining a network of teacher educators and teachers, and promoting OERs.

Sanjaya Mishra, Education Specialist,
Commonwealth of Learning, Canada

STF statistics		KOER statistics	
Members	15,000	Total web page views	2.2 million+
High Schools	6,000	Web pages created	7,000+
FOSS educational applications	15+	Resource files uploaded	4,000+
Emails	75,000+	Users / editors	538 (teacher contributors)

Teachers' Community of Learning

Our other engagement with the public education system has been through an intensive pilot with 16 government high schools in one block of Bengaluru Urban district. Supported by Cognizant Foundation, this program has involved integration of ICTs in school and classroom processes, providing us important insights on how ICTs can support progressive pedagogies in government high schools. It has also thrown open some important questions on the levels of exclusion faced by children from urban marginalised sections, and the challenges faced by schools to be relevant to learners' contexts. We seek to identify systemic approaches that can enable government school teachers improve classroom transaction and learning outcomes.

An important feature of the two mentioned programs is their complementing nature. Whereas the school level learning informs the design of our larger state-wide program, the shared experiences and resources of the STF and KOER improve individual school processes. *'Can educators shape techno-social processes towards making education truly emancipatory?',* is the question that leads us on.



IMPACT

Our strong relationship with the public education system gives us the credibility to influence education policy and curriculum. We are often invited to participate in curriculum and syllabus development processes for teacher education courses at graduate and undergraduate levels offered by apex government bodies at state and national levels.

Our work has clearly demonstrated a new system-wide model of teacher education, which is in line with the recommendation for self-directed and peer-based, lifelong learning of the National Curricular Framework for Teacher Education. The STF program has attracted national attention, with the review mission of the Ministry of Human Resource Development acknowledging it as a 'good practice' for all states to emulate. During the year, the governments of Assam and Telangana have sought our support on initiating a similar program in their states.



PRAKRIYE. OUR FIELD CENTRE

Prakriye is a resource centre supporting grassroots organisations and local governance institutions in Mysuru, India. Using ICT-enabled strategies, it seeks to build insights on a radically new development praxis that brings power to the peripheries.

OUR WORK THIS YEAR

In 2014-15, *Prakriye* continued work on ‘*Making Women’s Voices and Votes Count*’ - a project supported by the UN Women Fund for Gender Equality and National Mission for Empowerment of Women, Government of India. The project had two pillars – supporting marginalised women’s claims-making and building the leadership capacity of elected women in local self government.

It is after coming to the information centre that I knew I could claim the benefits offered by the agriculture department. I realised that women working in the fields are farmers too, and not just men.

Sundaramma, member of a women’s collective in Mysuru district, India

Supporting marginalised women’s claims-making

Since its inception in 2005, *Prakriye* has focused on enabling women from socially marginalised communities to set up ICT-enabled village information centres. Over time, these centres have become critical civic spaces for women and adolescent girls. Young women from the community are recruited and trained as information intermediaries to manage the centres, and aggregate and distribute public

information. Currently, there are 7 such information centres, each of which caters to about 4-5 villages in its vicinity. Through this project, we equipped the centres with a new MIS for effective tracking of entitlement applications, and introduced a mobile-based system on free software, to broadcast information updates, public health alerts and reminders about crucial citizen-forums. The trust reposed by poor women in the centre is a significant marker of its relevance.

In 2 *Panchayats* (local self government bodies), *Prakriye* used GIS-enabled participatory mapping to conduct social audits. This process focussed on the quality of public infrastructure and civic services such as schooling, and irregularities in beneficiary selection processes. Having access to local data has enormous benefits for citizens; these benefits are amplified when citizens can generate and control their own data. The GIS based data collection process has catalysed women’s collectives to demand better civic infrastructure in some



villages. Those who were left out of government subsidies were able to use the data to make a case for their rights.

Capacity-building of elected women

We worked with elected women in 7 *Panchayats* using videos to trigger discussion – supporting them through IVRS messaging and enabling them to comfortably use ICT resources of the *Panchayat*, like the camera, normally used only by men. Building solidarities between marginalised women and their elected women representatives



is vital for transforming local governance. Such linkages are often completely absent, as the political sphere is split along caste and community lines. *Prakriye* came up with the idea of convening dialogues and women-only village assemblies, as a means of connecting elected women to women community leaders. Eighteen dialogue-meetings and twelve women-only assemblies were convened. These forums generated new agendas that were then brought into local governance processes. They also helped the most marginalised women effectively demand their entitlements from their local representatives. To take an illustrative case: Devamma from a village in H.D. Kote block was determined to get the government subsidy for rural housing. She approached the *Prakriye* team to help her make a short film about the dilapidated condition of her current house. Devamma then presented the footage in the women-only assembly and successfully argued her case. Her claim had earlier been repeatedly ignored in the general citizen forums.

The project had the benefit of two other project sites – at *Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (KMVS)* and *ANANDI*, women’s rights organisations in Gujarat, India. As the lead agency implementing the project, we supported both partner organisations to build perspectives and capabilities in ICT use. The collaboration also helped us deepen our own understanding.

IMPACT

‘Making Women’s Voices and Votes Count’ was a partnership project in which we were able to transfer our learning and embed ICTs in the core strategies of two highly respected NGOs in India. As an independent evaluation of this project observed: *“This initiative has been catalytic in building innovative linkages between gender, governance and technology at KMVS, ANANDI and Prakriye.... (causing) a disruption in the traditional landscape of male control over information and communication, positioning women as key interlocutors in the local governance context”*.



FEMINIST FRAMEWORKS

Through our research, advocacy and network-building efforts on gender and ICTs, we offer a critical perspective on technology and gender relations. We seek to be theoretically grounded in our ideas of gender justice in a world being reconstituted digitally, rejecting both tech-euphoria and techno-skepticism.

OUR WORK THIS YEAR

'Women-gov' research project

This two-year action research initiative (2012-14) explored how digital technologies can strengthen marginalised women's engagement with local governance systems. Supported by IDRC Canada, project teams from *Instituto Nupef* in Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), the University of the Western Cape in Cape Town (South Africa) and IT for Change came together to study how digitally-enabled pathways promote marginalised women's citizenship.

As both a researcher and an activist, it is always a pleasure to work with IT For Change. Their research challenges my own thinking and praxis, inviting new avenues for both research and collaboration. Their commitments in the field, combined with rigorous and human-centred analysis, invite the respect and admiration of those who work with them. I hope to continue finding new and exciting ways of learning from and working with the team at IT For Change in our common work of building a fairer future.

Sonia Randhawa, Director, Centre for Independent Journalism, Malaysia and Board Member, ISIS International Manila

Through an action research methodology, the teams partnered with Afro-Brazilian women in Brazil, *dalit* women's collectives in India, and young women from peri-urban neighborhoods in South Africa. Access to public information online and digital story-telling techniques were used in Brazil to bring women's voices into local governance processes. Action research participants in India were supported to run public information centres that became the locus for a new public information culture and citizen-

education. They collected data and led evidence-based dialogues with citizen forums, using community media, GIS audits of civic amenities and mobile-based IVRS networks. In South Africa, social media platforms and digital video-stories were used to create a civic consciousness among young women, to explore what it means to be 'political' in the post-apartheid context. These discussions led to local level campaigns on violence against women, women's access to public employment, and safe transport services.

The study found that connectivity can open up new routes to marginalised women's empowerment, only if it can expand their informational, communicative and associational capabilities. This presupposes policy frameworks for women's active citizenship in the information society, so that women can participate as co-creators of the local governance digital ecosystem, rather than remain passive consumers of services.

10-country research study on women's rights online

In mid-2014, the World Wide Web (WWW) Foundation approached us to provide advisory oversight to their 10-country research and policy advocacy initiative on *'ICTs for Empowerment of Women and Girls'*, across Africa, Asia and South America. Additionally, we were also entrusted with the India component of the research.

In this dual role, we have been able to bring in a nuanced analytical perspective to the research process, also learning from the community of researchers. Our work on gender and ICTs has taught us to see empowerment as more than just a process by which women claim technology. We have alerted digital rights activists to the need for paying attention to the foundational code determining the digital architecture. Over the past year, the debates on net neutrality and zero rating have alerted us to the perils of buying into a well-packaged, but walled, Internet. We hope to bring these insights into the WWW Foundation's research.

Re-wiring women's rights debates

Over the years, we have sought to influence the 'ICTs and women's rights' discourse in India through reflective learning spaces. In September 2014, we held a 3 day short course on *'Re-Wiring Women's Rights Debates in the Digital Age'* in New Delhi, bringing together over thirty activists, NGO leaders as well as young researchers working in the areas of women's rights and social justice. The conversations were able to identify critical concerns straddling democracy, accountable governance and gender justice, in the digital age.

Engaging with critical global debates on gender and development

Informing advocacy processes with our learnings has been an important mandate for us. This year, we have worked with global coalitions – the Women's Major Group and the Post-2015 Women's Coalition – to articulate the gender and ICT connection to Sustainable Development Goals. We have also been invited by UNESCO to join the International Steering Committee of the Global Alliance on Media and Gender.

IMPACT

In the area of gender and ICTs, we are recognised today as idea leaders. Our contributions – emphasising that analysis on digital technologies pays heed to the historical experiences of marginality in the global south – have resonated equally with spaces of scholarship, such as conferences hosted by leading universities; policy processes including the Beijing Plus 20 review; and activist networks like MAKAAAM, a platform for women farmers' rights in India. We do realise the responsibility this brings to be a learning organisation. As digital technologies become intrinsic to women's everyday lives, our work must be able to clearly reflect the trajectories for transformative change.



GOVERNANCE

In times of techno-mediated governance, IT for Change seeks to further the agenda of 'deepening democracy'. Our work argues the need for bringing citizen rights and the standpoints of the marginalised to the centre of digitalised service delivery, public information systems and open data.

OUR WORK THIS YEAR

Research study on gender-responsive e-government

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) commissioned IT for Change to spearhead a five country research on gender and e-government in the Asia-Pacific, in mid-2014. The objective of this study – which spans Australia, India, Fiji, Philippines and the Republic of Korea – is to glean key policy insights in the area of designing e-government innovations for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. The country research for India is also being undertaken by IT for Change's team.

The technicalisation of e-governance has meant adoption of gender neutral frameworks in e-government plans. What we hope to see through this research is a framework and road map for making e-government a political opportunity for inclusion and gender justice. Our field research in India has examined a mobile-based system of the state of Andhra Pradesh that enables women to report gender-based violence in the community. We also studied a web portal set up by the *Kudumbashree* Mission in Kerala that promotes discussions on gender issues among women's collectives situated in different locations in the state.

Initial findings show how the design of the e-government ecosystem directly impacts outcomes for gender justice. Open Data and proactive disclosure policies, effective management of Public Private Partnerships in e-government initiatives, and clear safeguards for data privacy and security, all have a role to play in women's empowerment through e-government.

The key findings of the five country research will be published in October 2015 in the form of a synthesis report that addresses policy makers in Asia-Pacific.

Advocacy for inclusive governance models

Over the past year, we have influenced policy processes at national and state levels – arguing for the strategic use of ICTs to achieve the goal of decentralisation and local self-governance and to promote citizen participation in local governance. Our field pilots have enabled us to engage with the state committee for revision of the local governance legislation. We have also joined the National Forum for Action on Convergence, a pan-India network, to advocate for a convergent service delivery system that is responsive to the needs of the most marginalised sections. Calling civil society actors to reject centralised ICT-enabled service delivery models, we have proposed alternative models that use technology to put communities at the centre of public services and governance.

Our work has drawn us into various learning partnerships. With the Department of Economics, St. Teresa's College in Eranakulam, Kerala, we designed an impact study for their *e-jaalakam* (e-window) initiative for taking 'e-government literacy' to people. As a member of the evaluation team studying *Sanchar Shakti*, a value-added mobile services program of the Department of Telecommunications, Government of India, we contributed a report that was received with considerable interest.

IMPACT

Our e-governance research, network-building with civil society organisations and engagement with policy makers has helped us stay at the cutting edge of the emerging discourse on integrating technology into governance systems. Telecommunications and e-governance policies are a significant part of the current government's Digital India initiative. Through our leadership, we hope to influence its evolution, ensuring that citizenship concerns are at the centre of the debate.

IT for Change has consistently played a role in disseminating information about the socio-political consequences of use of technology in governance. I find that IT for Change serves as an important platform to unpack perceptions about the alleged neutrality of technology in developmental efforts, by bringing together a diverse set of stakeholders from CSOs, Government, academic institutions and software professionals, thereby nurturing informed discussion on the topic.

Rakshita Swamy, Mazdoor Kissan Shakti Sangathan, India



INTERNET GOVERNANCE

In our engagement with Internet governance, we strive to democratise technologies and their control, and for this purpose, advocate appropriate global and national governance models. We are striving to build a people's movement in this area, for no serious shift of power can take place without a struggle by those who desire it.

OUR WORK THIS YEAR

Spearheading a global coalition

Last year, IT for Change co-founded, and took charge of the secretariat of, the Just Net Coalition (JNC). Within a year, JNC has become a major civil society voice in global policy forums.

Throughout this year, JNC engaged with, and made submissions in, all key areas of global governance, be

A characteristic of IT for Change, unusual in the research sector, is its ability to analyse and engage with both local grass-roots development issues and high level policy. This is central to being able to link social justice issues with internet governance structures; and to introduce an element of genuine democracy into the Internet governance domain.

Sean O Siochru, Nexus Research and long-standing Communications Rights Activist, Ireland

it the annual BRICS summit, the International Telecommunication Union's Plenipotentiary Conference, ICANN's oversight transition, the UN Human Rights Council report on privacy, the Italian Draft Declaration of Internet Rights, or UNESCO's processes on engagement with Internet issues. Few global coalitions can boast of such a wide range of engagement with Internet issues. For JNC, being able to arrive this far in the first year of existence, with little financial resources, can be considered a singular achievement.

Towards an Internet Social Forum

Along with other groups, IT for Change mounted a strong opposition to the Netmundial Initiative – an effort by dominant global political and economic actors to define a new locus for the global governance of the Internet, centred on the World Economic Forum. Taking a leaf out of the World Social Forum (WSF) that was set up as a counterpoint to the World Economic Forum, we put out a call for an Internet Social Forum. Many groups and individuals from across the world have responded to this call with enthusiasm. We held a workshop at the 2015 WSF in Tunis, to galvanise the idea and build its emerging contours. The workshop issued the *'Tunis Call for a People's Internet'*. The Internet Social Forum will now be held as a thematic forum of the World Social Forum in 2016.

Challenging hegemony on the Internet

With a view to counter the economic and political hegemony of the US over the Internet, IT for Change helped organise a BRICS panel at the Russia Internet Governance Forum, in April 2015. Here, we

presented a concrete proposal for institutionalising a framework of close cooperation among the BRICS countries on economic and social issues pertaining to the Internet, also writing about it in the popular media.

Net neutrality

Among key Internet governance issues, net neutrality has been the most prominent over the last year. We are a founding member of the Global Coalition on Net Neutrality, and we have helped hone its definition for net neutrality. We have emphasised that the Internet be maintained as an open platform for promoting equality of opportunity. Net neutrality does not only concern anti-competitive practices, but also people's freedoms in social, economic and cultural fields.

For an egalitarian Internet in India

In India, we participated in campaigns for net neutrality, responding to the consultation exercise undertaken by Government of India on this issue. As the debate acquires momentum in India, we have taken a strong position against net neutrality violations and practices like zero rating. Our unique contribution to the net neutrality debate, which was noted in a government report on the issue, has been to stress its egalitarian basis in contrast to the largely liberal framework in which the issue gets cast. This is why we have argued that protective discrimination in favour of legally mandated public interest content should not fall in the same bracket as commercially motivated zero rated content.

In this regard, we made a point in the Economic and Political Weekly about how '*Net Neutrality is Basically Internet Egalitarianism*', and held a workshop on '*Regulating the Internet in public interest – Net neutrality and other issues*', in May 2015. We stressed that the question is not about whether the Internet should be regulated or not; it is about how it can be regulated in public interest.

IMPACT

Over the past year, our work has contributed to shaping a progressive global constituency in the Internet governance arena, dominated as it is by liberal, even neoliberal, ideologies. As our network grows, we are also seen as key voices articulating a Southern perspective. We have begun to make a mark on new regulatory regimes developing around the Internet – attuning them to social and economic rights of people.

At a critical time in history when the powerful enabling Internet technology is severely threatened, risking death of the promise of a truly equitable, fair and prosperous global order, it's heartening to witness the great work being championed by ITfC. At the vanguard of securing the Internet from privatisation and extremism, ITfC has excelled in leading the JNC forum – a group of unrelenting Internet Freedom Fighters, resolute on ensuring that the Internet remains free and open to all the people around the world.

Alex Gakuru, Executive Director, Content Development & Intellectual Property (CODE-IP) Trust, Kenya



DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORKS FOR A DIGITAL ERA

The affordances of digital technology herald new possibilities for the information and knowledge commons, and for collaborations across geography. But this promise can be realised for the empowerment of marginalised people only if the evolutionary path of technology can be appropriately influenced by frameworks of equity and social and economic justice. This vision is at the core of our approach to development.

OUR WORK THIS YEAR

Round Table on 'Inclusion in the network society'

At IT for Change, we have been keen to create a space where research scholars, development practitioners and activists from across the world, can discuss and deliberate upon the question of inclusion and exclusion in the network society context. In this regard, with support from IDRC Canada, we organised a Round Table bringing together 28 participants, in October 2014.

A key insight from this forum was that inclusion may not be obtained with connectivity. On the contrary, connectivity may exacerbate exclusion, as the terms of participation in emerging digital networks are determined by powerful Internet intermediary companies and not by citizen-users. Discussions also pointed to how the potential of the Internet to emerge as a site for a global knowledge commons and a new-age agora for free political expression is thwarted by a new form of capitalism that is built over manipulation of personal data. Participants identified future research directions in the field of networks, development and inclusion, key among which are the need to critically unpack the idea of digital openness and interrogate platform-power.

Data governance

Data that emerges out of digital networks is perhaps the most powerful economic resource today. It has become a site of contestation between states and citizens, and between powerful corporations and individual users. We contributed to the conceptual thinking around this phenomenon through our commentary on the 'network data complex' (the powerful economic alliances trying to dominate the world through data control) in the special edition of GenderIT.org that commemorated the life and work of academic and activist, Heike Jensen. Our inputs into the Asia Pacific Regional CSO Engagement Mechanism (AP-RCEM) has helped bring data governance issues into civil society discussions and responses to the UN Secretary General's Report on the post-2015 agenda.

Post-2015 development agenda debates

Our global policy work in relation to the post-2015 agenda also took us to the High Level UN event in New York on 'Contributions of North-South, South-South, Triangular Cooperation, and ICT for development to the implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda'. Here, we emphasised the importance of a

public goods framework, in realising the potential of ICTs as an effective means of implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

IMPACT

Right from 2009, when there was a push for 'Open Development' among the global funding community, we have been a critical voice establishing the distinction between digital openness and public-ness. Our work this year has continued to push thinking, deliberation and policy advocacy in this direction of asking the hard questions of where power lies, and what new forms of social exclusion are emerging in the age of big data and platform-politics.

Our effort to bring conceptual rigour to the field of development in the network society has contributed to a shared vocabulary among progressive groups. This has widened our constituency, making possible many collaborations across rights struggles and policy areas where concerns for structural exclusion are framed and asserted.

From mobilising thousands to protect and defend the Open Internet for all, to bringing social justice and women rights to the core of its agenda, IT for Change is the public interest voice, translating solid principles into actions to improve access, equality and rights for all Indians, especially those who need it the most. At Web We Want, we work closely with them, and consider the organisation global south leaders. We learn from them every day.

Renata Avila, Web We Want Initiative,
WWW Foundation

ANNEXURES

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Balance Sheet as on 31st March 2015

2013-14	Liabilities	2014-15	%	2013-14	Assets	2014-15	%
6,828,901	General Fund	6,292,670	33	1,183,464	Fixed Assets	950,407	5
7,530,209	Organisation Stabilisation Fund	8,927,754	46	19,473,296	Current Assets, Loans and Advances	16,688,864	87
1,183,464	Asset Fund	950,408	5	2,019,656	Receivables	1,582,742	8
6,952,403	Advance Account	1,974,577	10				
181,438	Sundry Payables	1,076,604	6				
22,676,416	Total	19,222,013	100	22,676,416	Total	19,222,013	100

Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31st March 2015

2013-14	Expenditure	2014-15	%	2013-14	Income	2014-15	%
8,476,205	Personnel Costs	9,348,771	51	13,339,540	Funds received	15,813,926	86
3,772,595	Operating Costs	6,069,938	33	2,997,366	Other Income	2,039,935	11
1,502,319	Administration Costs	1,787,615	10	603,105	Excess of Expenditure over Income-depreciation transferred to Asset Fund	491,462	3
603,105	Depreciation	491,462	3				
1,292,894	Excess of Income over Expenditure	323,768	2				
1,292,893	Appropriation towards Organisational Expenses	323,768	2				
16,940,011	Total	18,345,323	100	16,940,011	Total	18,345,323	100

All amounts in Indian Rupees (INR)

Schedule of Funds Received and Utilised during the year 2014-15

Project	Funder - Country	Opening Balance	Funds Received	Funds Utilised	% of Funds Utilised	Closing Balance
Making Local Governance Work for Women: Exploring New Institutional Possibilities	International Development Research Centre – Canada	2,251,690	421,674	2,673,364	16	0
Building a research agenda on inclusion in the network society	International Development Research Centre – Canada	2,844,122	299,707	3,143,829	18	0
Making Women's Voices and Votes Count	UN Women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women)	62,518	2,515,380	2,577,898	15	0
Community Convergence Centres run by women's collectives: Leveraging key power nodes in the community for women's empowerment	National Mission for Empowerment of Women, Government of India – India	948,264	0	948,264	6	0
Collaborative co-creation of OER by teacher educators and teachers in India: A participatory action research study	International Development Research Centre – Canada	845,809	2,500,690	2,068,479	12	1,278,020
Teachers' Community of Learning: School program for ICT integration	Cognizant Foundation – India	0	1,927,000	1,591,889	9	335,111
Local Action to Secure Internet Rights (LASIR)	The Association for Progressive Communications – South Africa	0	1,289,392	927,946	5	361,446
Several	UNICEF – India, Rotary IT BT Corridor – India, CEMCA – India, The University of Pennsylvania – USA and Institute of Development Studies – UK	0	3,214,439	3,214,439	19	0
Total		6,952,403	12,168,282	17,146,108	100	1,974,577

All amounts in Indian Rupees (INR)

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1. Gurumurthy, Anita and Chami, Nandini (2015), 'ICTs and political participation.' In: Peng Hwa Ang and Robin Mansell. ed. The International Encyclopedia of Digital Communication and Society. UK: Wiley-Blackwell.
2. Singh, Parminder Jeet (2015), 'Fork in the Road to the Future of Global Governance of the Internet', Digital Debates, Observer Research Foundation and Global Policy Journal, www.globalpolicyjournal.com/projects/gp-e-books/digital-debates-cyfy-journal-2015
3. Singh, Parminder Jeet (2015), 'Why is India a follower in CyberSpace when it can lead?', The Wire, www.thewire.in/2015/07/06/why-is-india-a-follower-in-cyberspace-when-it-can-lead-5568/
4. Chami, Nandini (2015), 'Annotations', Digital Activism in Asia Reader, Luneberg: Meson Press, www.meson.press/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/9783957960511-Digital-Activism-Asia-Reader.pdf
5. Singh, Parminder Jeet (2015), 'Net Neutrality is basically internet egalitarianism', Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. 50, Issue No.19, www.epw.in/commentary/net-neutrality-basically-internet-egalitarianism.html
6. Singh, Parminder Jeet (2014), 'Global Internet Governance: a developing country perspective', Third World Network, www.twn.my/title2/resurgence/2014/287-288/cover02.htm
7. Gurumurthy, Anita and Chami, Nandini (2014), 'New readings of the tea cup – revisiting gender justice in the information society', Post-2015 Women's Coalition, www.genderit.org/resources/new-readings-tea-cup-revisiting-gender-justice-information-society
8. Gurumurthy, Anita and Chami, Nandini (2014), 'Gender Equality in the Information Society: A review of current literature and recommendations for policy and practice,' UK: BRIDGE, www.eldis.org/vfile/upload/4/document/1409/Gender%20and%20ICTs%20briefing%202014.pdf



For more information

Making Women's Voices and Votes Count
www.gender-is-citizenship.net/unwomen

Women-gov
www.gender-is-citizenship.net/women-and-governance

CITIGEN Asia
www.gender-is-citizenship.net/citigen

Karnataka Open Educational Resources
www.karnatakaeducation.org.in/KOER/en/index.php/Main_Page

Just Net Coalition
www.justnetcoalition.org

Internet Social Forum
www.internetsocialforum.net





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Front Cover: An information fair in our field area, Mysuru.

Back Cover: Women at a community screening, Mysuru. This photograph won the UN Women Fund for Gender Equality Photo Competition 2015.

IT for Change, established in 2000, is a Society registered under the Karnataka Societies Registration Act 1960. It is also registered under Section 12(a) of the Income Tax Act 1961, and recognised under Section 80G of the same Act.

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