Annual Report 2011-2012

IT for Change

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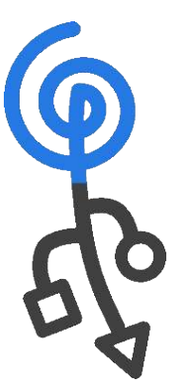

Front Cover: *Kishoris* learning to use video technology, Attiguppe village, Mysore district, India

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Annual Report
2011-2012

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IT for Change

Acronyms

ACTA	Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement
ANM	Auxiliary Nurse Midwife
APC	Association for Progressive Communications
APWLD	Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development
AWAKE	Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Karnataka
AWID	Association for Women's Rights in Development
BEO	Block Education Officer
BRC	Block Resource Centre
C- LAMPS	Centre for Leadership and Management in Public Services
CABE	Central Advisory Board of Education
CAL	Computer Aided Learning
CDL	Communication for Development and Learning
CITIGEN- ASIA	Gender and Citizenship in the Information Society - Asia
CKC	Community Knowledge Centre
CSC	Common Service Centre
CSTD	Commission on Science and Technology for Development
DFID	Department for International Development
DIET	District Institute of Education and Training
DIT	Department of Information Technology
DoPT	Department of Personnel and Training
DSERT	Department of State Educational Research and Training
DTE	Department of Technical Education
DU	Delhi University
EADI	European Association of Development, Research and Training Institutes
EDS	Electronic Delivery of Services
EIS	Euro-India Spirit Project
ELM	Education Leadership and Management
EPSI	European Public Sector Information
EU	European Union
FAQ	Frequently Asked Questions
FLACSO	Latin American School of Social Sciences
FLOSS	Free/Libre/Open Source Software
FOSSCOMM	Free and Open Source Software Community Network
GIS	Geographic Information System
GoI	Government of India
IBSA	India, Brazil and South Africa
ICTD	Information and Communication Technology for Development
ICTs	Information and Communication Technologies
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
IG	Internet Governance
IGC	Internet Governance Caucus
IGF	Internet Governance Forum

IGNOU	Indira Gandhi National Open University
IIT	Indian Institute of Technology
ITfC	IT for Change
JRM	Joint Review Mission
KBW	Knowledge Building Workshop
KC	Karnataka Community
KJA	Karanataka Jnana Aayoga
KKC	Karnataka Knowledge Commission
KMKN	Knowledge Management and Knowledge Networking
KNP+	Karnataka Network of Positive People
MC	Managing Committee
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MHRD	Ministry of Human Resource Development
MK4D	Mobilising Knowledge for Development
MKSS	*Mazdoor Kisan Shakti Sangathan*
MM	*Mahiti Manthana*
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MS	*Mahila Samakhya*
MS Kendra	*Mahila Shikshana Kendra*
MSK	*Mahila Samakhya* Karnataka
NCERT	National Council for Educational Research and Training
NCFTE	National Curricular Framework for Teacher-Education
NCTE	National Council for Teacher Education
NeGP	National e-Governance Programme
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMK	*Namma Mahiti Kendra*
NITTTR	National Institute for Technical Teachers' Training and Research
NMEICT	National Mission on Education through ICTs
NVEQF	National Vocational Education Qualification Framework
OSS	One Stop Shop programme
PLHIV	People Living with HIV/AIDS
PPCP	Public-Private Community Partnership
PPU	Policy Planning Unit
PSC	Public Software Centre
PSSA	Public Sector Software Architecture
RMSA	*Rashtriya Madhyamika Shikshana Abhiyan*
RRCE	Regional Resource Centre for Education
RTE	Right to Education
RTI	Right to Information
SCERT	State Council for Educational Research and Training
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SOPA	Suppression of Online Piracy Act
SSA	*Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*
STF	Subject Teacher Forum
SVYM	Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement

TCoL	Teachers' Communities of Learning
TERI	The Energy and Resources Institute
TLM	Teaching-Learning Material
TMK	*Taluk Mahiti Kendra*
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
UID	Unique Identification Number
UN-Solex	United Nations Solution Exchange
UNDAW	United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
USRN	University State Resource Network
WE-IT	Women's Enterprise and Information Technology
WMC	Women and Media Collective
WSIS	World Summit on the Information Society

A Note from the Directors

(Re) Establishing 'Publicness' in the Network Society — A Counter to Run-away Neo-liberalism

The world today is witness to an intense political conflict between the forces of democracy and of neo-liberalism. This conflict, in network society terms, can be seen on two planes; between centralising and decentralising forces, and between forces for corporatisation and those promoting public and commons-based spaces and systems. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) play a crucial role with regard to both these opposing set of vectors. Our work at IT for Change centrally addresses this larger structural role of ICTs in shaping the emerging social paradigm.

Centralising Economic and Political Power

The early promise of the Internet was in extending 'power to the edges'. It was claimed that the Internet had created a new level playing field. To some extent this has indeed happened. Yet, paradoxically, the Internet today is increasingly leveraged for concentration of economic and social power in ways never seen before. A few companies such as Apple, Google, Facebook, Twitter and Microsoft together control a very large part of our digital world. John Bellamy Foster and Robert W. McChesney discuss this in their commentary on 'The Internet's Unholy Marriage to Capitalism', noting how "we are entering a world of digital feudalism, where a handful of colossal corporate mega-giants rule private empires.... the top 10 Web sites accounted for 31 percent of US page views in 2001, 40 percent in 2006, and about 75 percent in 2010..." (Monthly Review, March 2011)

The Internet is also concentrating political power. The proposed United States legislation, Suppression of Online Piracy Act (SOPA), and the plurilateral treaty, Anti-Counterfeiting Trade Agreement (ACTA), are means for extra-territorial enforcement of the laws of the United States and other Northern countries, mostly towards intellectual property-based global economic exploitation, using the Internet as a key instrument for this purpose. The latest of these threats is the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership, sought to be labelled simply as a 'trade agreement,' which bestows new rights and privileges for major corporations, while curtailing the political power of nation states. The Trans-Pacific Partnership proposes a parallel system of justice covering areas from affordable medicines, Internet freedoms and intellectual property rights, to labour laws and environmental protection, further extending the new forms of colonisation of the developing world. The clampdown on WikiLeaks through exerting improper political influence over credit and other payment systems, domain name server operators, web hosting services, online advertisement services etc. is a classical instance of the illegitimate exercise of coercive power in an extra-territorial manner.

The coming together of the most powerful economic and political interests in the network society is bringing alive the most bizarre sci-fi predictions. The proposed Cyber Intelligence Sharing and Protection Act of the United States presents the spectre of a global cyber control room where big business and United States government agents sit together, scrutinising and controlling the minutest details of our world, employing the new global neural system of ICTs. Hegemonic power today is about keeping the Internet free from political governance, not so much for protecting freedom of expression, as is mostly made out, but for perpetuating illegitimate control of the cyberspace. In this global geo-political game, locating the pathways of struggles for human rights, equity and social justice is a tough proposition.

Competition v/s Collaboration — A Competing Value System

A second plane of the struggle between democracy and neo-liberalism in the information society is that of the philosophical divergence between the role of competition and collaboration in human life. Over the past few decades, we are witnesses to the mighty force of neo-liberal ideology, the world view that human beings best understand the language of competition for survival and that the market has a solution for every problem, whether it is economic, social or political. It is held that the experiment of developing large-scale public and commons-based systems has failed, and should now be abandoned. Information society developments are

playing a significant role in the entrenchment of such beliefs, as corporates have quickly latched on to the organisational opportunities of network society shifts, while the public sector, typically conservative, is still to wake up to them. Perhaps even more potent, as ICTs create new communicative and associational realms, is the fact that neo-liberals have almost fully won the battle of discursive hegemony. ICTs and the information society have successfully been sold as something essentially private and commercial. This however defies all logic, since ICTs are at least as effective tools for collaboration as for promoting competition.

In India, introduction of ICT-based systems in governance, education and health sectors is being cleverly leveraged for wholesale corporatisation – with private companies becoming lead public service delivery agencies (through the Common Services Centres scheme), architects of privatising the processes and curriculum of education (in school ICT programmes), and providers of insurance and medical services (as in smart card-based, privatised health delivery schemes). This is replacing the primacy of public institutions in these areas. Profit is presented as the only possible incentive that is able to organise large-scale systems, ignoring network society possibilities for public service reform and engaging community-based organisations.

Can the Tide be Reversed?

Although the path is difficult, taking on the hegemonic forces in the network society requires actors interested in positive social change to strategise well. To begin with, it is important to understand the deep structural social shifts that are under way and to influence them. Our response in this area has been to emphasise the role of public institutions, or more broadly, 'publicness', in developing the new institutional ecology of the network society. Manuel Castells, one of the foremost theoreticians of network society, describes the imperative in this manner:

"The public sector is at present the decisive actor to develop and shape the network society. Individual innovators, counter-cultural communities, and business firms have done their job at inventing a new society and diffusing it around the world. The shaping and guiding of this society is, as has always been the case in other societies, in the hands of the public sector, regardless of ideological discourses hiding this reality. And yet, the public sector is the sphere of society where new communication technologies are the least diffused and where organizational obstacles to innovation and networking are the most pronounced. Thus, reform of the public sector commands everything else in the process of productive shaping of the network society."

IT for Change has presented theoretical frameworks, and works towards practical applications, of the 'Network Public', which may be defined as the public aspects and parts of the *Network*, the main structural feature of the network society. The 'Network Public' is not just state owned public institutions as traditionally understood. This term denotes networks of government and community institutions motivated by public interest rather than private profit, which can develop now as never before, employing the ICT-enabled opportunities.

Simultaneously, as the macro-framework of 'publicness' is asserted as the balancing factor to the run-away neo-liberalism of the dominant information society paradigm, it is important for social change actors to work towards creating and sustaining new collaborative forms made possible by ICTs. Employing the propensities of ICTs for decentralisation and horizontalisation, techno-social processes enabling networking and sharing of information resources can help reduce information asymmetries and allow marginalised communities to come together to exercise political and economic agency. Robust information systems can help social audits of developmental programmes of governments, enabling local participation and accountability. Participatory planning can be meaningful only with extensive use of ICTs for information development, information sharing as well as for communicating community choices. IT for Change has been working in all these areas, to effect change on the ground, and present programmatic and policy models for large-scale adoption.

This annual report gives a brief view of our work over 2011-2012, at both macro and micro levels, and our consistent efforts at reconciling them.

Directors

IT for Change

ICTs for Teacher Professional Development

The 'Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in education' space appears to be in a transition mode – till now, the default has been to uncritically accept the expertise of technology vendors, and public education systems have usually outsourced the entire processes of developing curricular resources and transaction to these vendors. The main agent in these programmes has been the 'computer faculty', a poorly paid, ill-equipped person, with some superficial knowledge about computers rather than any grounding in education. This has isolated the school system from meaningfully engaging with ICTs and has led to the failure of such programmes, with the education system unable to benefit from the large and exponentially increasing investments in this area in terms of any real impact on teaching-learning processes or outcomes.

We are now increasingly witnessing 'second-generation' ICTs in schools programmes, in which the programme design and implementation is being done by teachers and educationists, keeping in mind larger educational aims over narrow technology literacy goals. Such programmes duly consider the educational contexts as well as principles of curriculum and pedagogy, and have been able to obtain the ownership of schools and the commitment of teachers to integrate digital processes and methods into their own professional development as well as in their transactions with students. These programmes support the agency of the teacher and the learner, by enabling a social constructivist digital environment founded on the use of free software and digital content.

During the last few years, IT for Change's work in education has included research to develop a deeper understanding of ICTs in education, teacher capacity-building on techno-pedagogical processes, piloting demonstration projects with schools and policy advocacy. Based on our learnings from this work, during 2011-2012, IT for Change was able to work on a systemic 'ICT in education' model in teacher education, an area identified as very important and challenging in school education. The National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education 2010 (NCFTE), a landmark document in teacher education, seeks teacher education models that are self-directed, self-paced, peer-learning-based, mentored and continuous. Our work, through the 'Subject Teacher Forum' programme (STF) in collaboration with the *Rashtriya Madhyamika Shiksha Abhiyan* (RMSA) programme of the secondary education system in Karnataka, sought to make this vision a reality through a programme design that empowers teachers system-wide; using ICTs to access, create and share curricular resources and to network with one another for 'sharing and seeking'. We foresee that many features of this model would integrate into the mainstream in-service teacher education programmes of the public education system.

This year, apart from the STF programme, our main areas of work have been:

1. Deep engagement with select schools on building teachers' communities of learning

2. Capacity-building of teacher educators and NGOs working in education

3. Conducting research

4. Using learnings from our research, capacity-building and programmatic work for policy advocacy

Radha and Roopa, teachers in Bengaluru, exploring Geogebra, a public software educational tool .

Systemic Teacher Professional Development Model

We conceptualised and designed the STF programme, along with RMSA Karnataka, to provide training and support in the use of digital tools and processes to empower teachers, use public software educational tools to advance their own subject understanding, engage in discussions about their discipline, participate in an online community of learning, and create and share open educational resources. The programme spanned over 800 high schools where ICT facilities have been provided by the government, in 14 districts of Karnataka. We conducted workshops at the state level, to develop 240 high school teachers as resource persons (80 each in Mathematics, Science and Social Science), who subsequently trained around 2,000 teachers from over 800 schools, through an 'enhanced cascade' model. The workshops' curriculum included computer skills, basic web 2.0 skills and public educational software tools relevant to their subject, as well as discussions relating to National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2005[1] position papers and the possibilities enabled by digital processes for supporting constructivist teaching-learning.

Director RMSA, M. N. Baig interacting with participants via video conference in a cascade workshop at the Kodagu DIET, from his state office in Bengaluru.

The workshops with teachers were complemented by interactions across virtual platforms, comprising mailing groups (http://groups.google.com/group/mathssciencestf and http://groups.google.com/group/socialsciencestf) and a web portal (http://RMSA.karnataka education.org.in) where teachers connected to one another to share resources, discuss core teaching-learning and related topics. The teachers were also able to understand and engage at a deeper level with the philosophy of constructivism that has been espoused by the NCF 2005 and the possibilities offered by developing ICT-related capabilities. For many teachers it was a novel experience to create their own contextual digital resources in the local language. The cascade programme involved the high school resource persons trained by IT for Change, working with their colleagues in the District Institute of Education and Training (DIET) computer labs in their districts. The resource persons stayed in contact with the IT for Change team before, during and after the cascade training through the mailing list and web portal, to share resources for the training and information about the participants/contexts, collate and share feedback about the training, and used this to dynamically plan their own training programmes.

There were two unique features about this cascade: Firstly, a large scale ICT programme on a cascade model was implemented fully in-house, using DIET ICT infrastructure and school teachers as resource persons, whereas traditionally ICT training is typically entirely outsourced. Secondly, the fear of 'cascade dilution' was proven to be largely unfounded; with regular interactions amongst themselves and with the IT for Change and state RMSA teams, the resource persons in many cases were able to do a better job (due to their higher contextual understanding) with transacting the curriculum. Thus the cascade model of teacher education is not inherently a weak model, however it is not possible to provide the intensive support it needs without the use of digital networks and resources. Hence, to improve the cascade model that is typical in most in-service teacher education programmes, teachers and

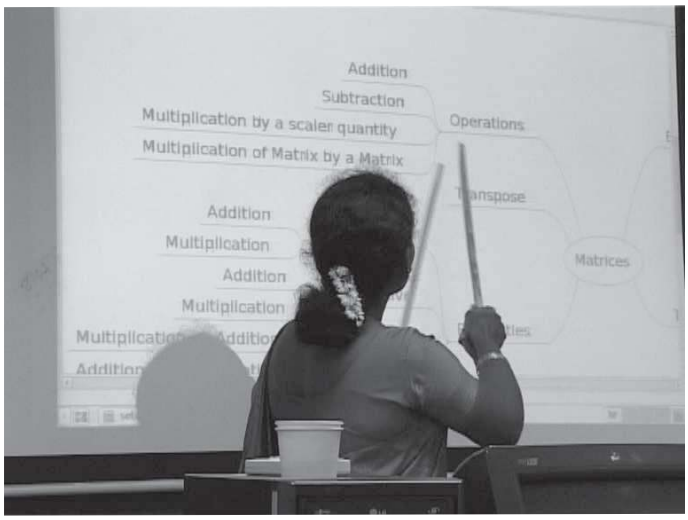
> ***The Subject Teacher Forum programme of RMSA seeks to enhance the competence of teachers through peer learning and accessing, creating and sharing open educational resources. IT for Change, our collaborating institution in this programme, has provided significant inputs to this programme, in working to integrate ICTs for teacher empowerment and professional development.***
>
> *M. N. Baig, Director, RMSA, Karnataka*

teacher educators need to be enabled to use ICT infrastructure effectively than rely wholly on external vendors. This kind of systemic capacity has important implications for enhancing the quality of in-service teacher education.

> ***The forum develops the teachers' attitude and interest. As we receive a lot of information daily on the forum, we have begun to use it in our classes. It is wonderful to have this kind of communication between teachers.***
>
> *Veerendra T, Teacher, GHS Kadabagere, Davangere*

The virtual learning interactions continued beyond the resource persons, to cover the teachers trained in the cascade. The mailing lists set up in June 2011 had crossed the 3,000 email count by March 2012, belying any apprehensions that teachers would not take to the new virtual medium of interaction. Sharing existing and created resources, asking questions relating to academic issues, supporting and guiding peers in learning to become comfortable in the new digital methods of teaching-learning, can all be seen in these interactions.

With support from United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) we made a film titled 'Transforming Teacher Education with Public Software' to convey the core principles of our intervention in the STF. The main idea behind the film is to enable policy makers and administrators of other states in India, and also other countries, to get a clear idea of the principles and processes involved in adopting public educational software in their public education systems. The film consists of workshop footage and interviews with teachers and key actors of the programme and can be accessed at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D-kgSW_o9z8. We also prepared a 'Public software tool kit for teacher education', which can support a similar programme in other locations. While the STF programme was an extensive one, seeking to bring together all high school teachers (with access to ICTs) across Karnataka, IT for Change also engaged with a more intensive programme; 'Teachers' Communities of Learning' (TCoL), with select schools, allowing for regular interactions with individual teachers. With support from Cognizant Foundation, we worked with model primary schools in Yediyur and Weavers Colony, high schools in Begur and Nelamangala (all Bengaluru) and Mallupura (Nanjagud). In this intensive model, we were able to work with all teachers in these schools on various techno-pedagogical aspects relating to basic technical skill building, creation of digital resources and integrating ICTs into classroom transactions. Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has an annual 'National Award for Innovative Use of ICT in Teaching', and the work done by Radha Narve and Rajesh Y. N. from Begur and Mallupura schools, respectively, integrating ICTs into the teaching learning was submitted by DSERT, in the government schools category for 2011-2012.



A teacher using Free mind, a creative thinking tool , to explain Mathematical concepts.

An important learning is that once teachers feel comfortable with various techno-pedagogical possibilities, through using several software applications and utilities, accessing multiple educational resources, and connecting through virtual networks, their creative thinking and keenness to explore is strengthened. This, we find, is in contrast to teachers being seen as 'users' of very few proprietary software applications or specific pre-packaged content, wherein their agency can get restricted. In other words, providing a rich digital environment and strengthening teachers' capabilities to engage with this environment on their own terms appears to provide a strong foundation for teachers' professional development and agency.

For the education system as a whole to begin this process of adopting digital methods, resources and tools, to understand the philosophy and the pedagogical imperative of public software, and the significance of accessing

and creating open digital resources, actors other than teachers need to be engaged with. We had opportunities to engage with teacher educators, Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) members, policy makers and education administrators during the year.

We worked with Centre for Leadership and Management in Public Services (C-LAMPS) to integrate ICT processes into two of their Education Leadership and Management (ELM) programmes. One was the *Kalika Balaga* (community of learners) programme with teacher educators from DIETs and Block Resource Centres (BRCs) across Karnataka. The second was the *Samartha* programme of the Karnataka *Jnana Aayoga* (KJA) and Department of State Educational Research and Training (DSERT), to empower teacher educators and enable DIETs to become decentralised lead resource institutions. In both programmes, IT for Change designed and conducted workshops where participants used digital methods for collaborative construction of knowledge (Kannada commentaries[2] on NCF 2005 position papers in Science and Mathematics were also developed). The workshops for teacher educators and administrative staff of the DIETs included developing basic technical skills, web 2.0 skills and creating digital resources integrating public educational software tools. We also conducted capacity building workshops for NGOs working in education including American India Foundation, Concerned for Working Children, *Makkala Jagriti*, etc.

Manjula, a teacher of government model primary school, Yediyur, creating a solar eclipse simulation using 'Stellarium' and making a video of the simulation using 'RecordMyDesktop'.

Microsoft Academies in Karnataka

Microsoft had entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with few state governments, in which the curriculum is restricted to their proprietary software applications. Along with our network of educationists, we have argued that such arrangements use public funds to promote the proprietary software of a dominant vendor, which is inherently against public interest, and how instead, the education system could easily create the same infrastructure (comprising simply of computer labs), to train teachers on public software tools, which could be freely shared with them during training. Such free sharing is prohibited by the proprietary software vendor. In Karnataka, on the expiry of the MOU with Microsoft, these academies have been taken over by DSERT to create in-house infrastructure for systemic ICT-related capacity-building.

IT for Change supported the curriculum design, development and faculty training for these academies on public software platforms and a variety of public educational tools and utilities. The curriculum has moved beyond mere office suite to a range of public educational tools, contextualised to the needs of staff in different roles. The earlier model was a significant market creation programme for a single vendor, while the large number of tools now used in the capacity-building programmes of the new '*eVidya* academies' are all freely shareable, promoting an environment of learning and sharing. This model could be used by other states with similar restrictive MOUs with proprietary software vendors. The danger from locking-in the large education system into proprietary offerings is not restricted to Microsoft alone – we see many monopolistic product vendors offering 'sweet deals' in the form of 'free training' to the education system. The costs to these companies of offering 'free training' is a fraction of the licence fees extorted through creation of a monopolistic environment, whereas investing a fraction of the licence fee amount on capacity-building and software enhancement would support universal access as well as participation, both educational imperatives in themselves.

Curriculum Development

IT for Change has been invited to participate in various formal work-groups dealing with curriculum design and development for integrating ICTs into education. We have participated in the MHRD Committee to draft new guidelines for revised teacher education scheme for the 12th five year plan of India and coordinated its 'ICT and Teacher Education' sub-group, participated in the National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE)[3] Committee on 'Distance Education and use of ICT in Teacher Education', and the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) committee for Quality Education. The aim here is to incorporate ICT education in teacher education as well as classroom learning in an integrated manner. At the state government level, we are a part of DSERT[4] ICT curriculum committee and DSERT pre-service curriculum revision committee. We were also invited by Andhra Pradesh State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT) to be a part of developing their Social Science and Geography textbooks, and were part of a Geography resource book development project of Eklavya.

> ***"IT for Change has marked its presence in public policy relating to ICTs in education, and has played a critical advocacy role in promoting the adoption of public software.***
>
> *Poonam Batra, Central Institute of Education, Delhi University*

Research

We are participating in the Tata Institute of Social Sciences research project - 'Collaborative Action Research on Resource Centres, their influence and impact'. The project aims to understand how teacher resource centres have been working. Our role is to support an understanding of how ICTs could be integrated into the functioning of resource centres, as well as using ICTs to analyse data about the functioning of these centres, including profiling users, patterns of usage of resources etc.

Policy Advocacy

IT for Change also made formal presentations[5] on the adoption of public software in education to senior policy makers in the central government, to the Joint Review Mission (JRM) of *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyaan* (SSA), to Education Secretaries in a MHRD workshop on guidelines for ICT@School programme (which is a large centrally sponsored scheme for promoting ICTs in school education) and to the SCERT directors in a MHRD workshop on the role of ICTs for Teacher Education.

Our advocacy work over the past four years has been able to influence the National Policy on ICTs in school education policy. The third draft released by MHRD in February 2011 included most of our suggestions given as feedback to the original draft, but the clause favouring Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) had been dropped. In a short period of a week, we were able to share feedback, endorsed by 66 eminent educationists across the country, with MHRD, that proprietary software is inherently harmful on pedagogical considerations. Proprietary software (and content) vests the control of important curricular

English teacher Gnana Jacob from government model primary school in Yediyur showing her students educational tools for English learning.

resources with private vendors, denying teachers and learners the ability to freely modify, share and collaborate in learning processes. The fourth and final draft, adopted, in March 2012 as national policy by Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE), an advisory body to MHRD, included in its clause on software a specific recommendation favouring the use of FOSS. The sub-committee, set up by CABE to study the issue of 'vendor driven ICT policy and programmes', also unequivocally pointed to the dangers from large technology vendors intent on creating a market for their proprietary products (both software and content) and the imperative of adopting digital resources that the education system can own and shape in public interest.

However, despite these two documents, state governments are still continuing their legacy habits of prescribing proprietary software platforms and applications in their syllabi and their procurement documents. We wrote a letter, endorsed by educationists, to the Maharashtra and Bihar governments on the need to avoid such specification. There is a clear need to engage with state governments all over the country to help them understand that adopting free and open source software in education in their syllabi and tender documents respectively is a pedagogical imperative, and an eminently practical process as well. Our film as well as the public software tool-kit can support any state government to adopt a programme similar to that in Kerala or Karnataka.

Looking Ahead

During 2012-2013 the STF programme will expand to cover Mathematics, Science and Social Science subject teachers in high schools (with computers) in all 34 educational districts of Karnataka. Additionally, language (English, Urdu and Marathi) and Art teachers will be trained and their subject teacher forums will also be created. We also plan to have a similar programme to create head teacher forums. Creation of local technical support infrastructure for public software will be continued, including training the DIET and BRC faculty on providing techno-pedagogical support to teachers.

While our work has focused on in-service training, during 2012-2013, we will extend our involvement to pre-service teacher education. We are working with the committee set-up by DSERT, on ICT integration into all subjects in the DEd. curriculum revision processes. We will also be working with elementary school teachers, in the Karnataka Computer Aided Learning (CAL) programme of SSA, focusing on ICT integration into middle school Mathematics. The 12th five year plan offers significant opportunities to teacher education institutions, and we will continue our work to develop systemic models for integrating ICTs in the public education system in Karnataka. We will also respond to requests from states, which have evinced interest for a similar programme. Our TCoL programme will continue with support from Cognizant Foundation in Bengaluru, from Sir Ratan Tata Trust's '*Kalike*' programme in Yadgir and from Azim Premji Foundation's 'Child Friendly Schools Initiative' in Surpur. Both Yadgir and Surpur blocks are in the socio-educationally backward Yadgir district.

IT for Change has been asked by DSERT to write the ICT text book for the ICT@Schools phase 3 programme. Our design for this textbook goes much beyond ICT literacy and focuses on computer aided teaching-learning. The aim is to make every subject teacher own the computer lab in the school by integrating ICTs into regular subject teaching-learning. IT for Change has also been invited to become a member of NCERT committee for the development of ICT curriculum for schools from classes six to twelve and to a second committee for developing science curriculum for elementary science education.

1 The National Curriculum Framework 2005 is a document published by NCERT, India, which provides the framework for making syllabi, textbooks and teaching within school education in India. (see http://ncert.nic.in)

2 Kannada commentaries on NCF 2005 position papers of Science and Mathematics can be accessed from: http://karnatakaeducation.org.in/

3 National Council for Teacher Education is the apex national body for teacher education. NCTE prescribes curriculum for teacher education, establishes assessment and certification for TE institutions etc.

4 DSERT is the SCERT of Karnataka, the apex state level body for curriculum design and teacher education

5 All presentations are available on: http://ITforChange.net/Education

Feminist Frameworks in the Information Society

Network society is game changing. In the past couple of years, we have seen popular discourse around the radical possibilities of tweeting and mobilising through social networking come of age, but at the same time, there is also a sense of discontent that the corporatised digital environment may not be the final frontier of freedoms. This is not yet another rant from the techno-sceptic old guard that has held the view that online space is a distraction, quite unrelated to social and gender transformation. Instead, it is from the die-hard geeks and liberals who have been forced to look at the disappearing paradigm of the digital commons that they swore by. The usurpation of the public spaces online by private corporate interests has slowly but surely become a necessary part of digital literacy in these times.

The Occupy movement itself has been contemplating a 'Facebook for the 99%', even as post-uprising events in the Arab countries have had to grapple with old questions about the structures of power that feminists have always raised. The brave, new digital world seems not so pertinent in these conversations and battlegrounds. The 'Twitter revolution' seems to be unable to deal with the hard questions of democracy in the current phase of change. Two things are clear: One, power, as it plays out through the structures and hierarchies of digital spaces, must be studied more closely as it intertwines with everyday reality, especially in reinforcing and creating structures of exploitation and marginalisation. Two, making the technological relevant to social transformation is a higher order process; it does not just happen. It must be claimed through contestation.

At IT for Change, we have found Southern feminism to offer worthy tools for this approach to enquiry and to the search for alternatives. By foregrounding power to interpret context, body, collectivity and aspirations in network society dialogues, our work on gender has created convincing and coherent analytical frameworks on engaging and reclaiming power in digitally mediated realities.

This year saw the 'Gender and citizenship in the information society in Asia' (CITIGEN-ASIA) research programme (http://gender-is-citizenship.net/citigen/) provide a concrete context for feminist network building in our work. The programme raised broader questions on gender, citizenship, development, participation and power through its constituent projects, think pieces, discussions and debates on issues of space (invited/invented spaces, multiple counter-publics and alternative public spheres), women's participation and representation in governance structures and right to communicate. This endeavour has simultaneously helped shape the next International Development Research Centre (IDRC)-funded programme initiated in 2012, which we are undertaking in partnership with scholars and organisations in South Africa and Brazil. The new programme, Women-gov (http://gender-is-citizenship.net/women-and-governance/) will explore how the characteristics of digital technologies can be suitably employed to create participatory models in governance such that they enable socially and economically marginalised women to gain centre stage in local democratic structures.

Research

Gender and Citizenship in the Information Society

In 2010, IT for Change, supported by IDRC, set up a two-year programme – CITIGEN-ASIA – to explore the evolving nature of citizenship of marginalised women in the global South in relation to the emerging information society. It was critical to examine from a feminist standpoint what the techno-social paradigm is, how it is reconstituting social structures and systems and what emergent patterns of power, participation and publics look like. We felt that looking at the challenges and opportunities for women's citizenship as they are shaped by new Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in relation to specific social and institutional

ecologies, would enable us to construct a bigger picture. The idea was to build theory, but more importantly, provide concepts for feminist action. Building a network of researchers and activists on information society and gender issues in Asia was also a strong incentive. The programme helped catalyse a very strong community of scholars and practitioners. With feminist and media organisations in Asia, like the Women and Media Collective (WMC) in Sri Lanka, Hong Kong In-media in Hong Kong, Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD) in Thailand, *Likhaan* in Philippines, and leading academic spaces such as the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Indian Institute of Technology Madras, and Centre for Women's Studies, University of Philippines, we pushed forward the mandate to mainstream network society debates through critical feminist perspectives. **(See Box 1).** To enrich the debates within the network, feminist practitioners and scholars from Asia and other regions were invited to join the network and to author think pieces that flag issues around gender, women's citizenship and network society. These shorter works were complementary to the empirical research. Prominent scholars, such as Farida Shaheed (Director of Research in *Shirkat Gah* – Women's Resource Centre, Pakistan), Supinya Klangnarong (Vice-Chair of the Campaign for Popular Media Reform, Thailand), Margarita Salas (independent consultant, Costa Rica), Heike Jensen (independent gender researcher and consultant, Germany), Desiree Lewis (Associate Professor, University of the Western Cape, South Africa) and Crystal Orderson (SABC News, South Africa), explored intersections between the micro-context of community information ecologies and macro socio-political phenomena in their think pieces. **(See Box 2).**

The CITIGEN-ASIA programme has created a platform for feminist thinkers and activists to shape network society debates. By balancing research processes with free-wheeling conversations, the programme has opened up a space for grounded theory. The network concretised its ideas also through two face-to-face meetings. In mid-2011, emerging concepts and tentative theories from the ongoing work in the CITIGEN-ASIA network were presented as 'Stories of Change' (http://gender-is-citizenship.net/citigen/Narratives_of_change), tracing movements in the work being undertaken across Asia. It was felt that feminist theorising around information

Box 1. The CITIGEN-ASIA research programme

Research teams in the CITIGEN-ASIA programme explored intersections between marginalised women's citizenship and their participation in the network society. Using desk research, empirical studies and action research methodologies, they traced out the contextual interconnections, offering a commentary on the challenges and opportunities for marginalised women in the emerging techno-social context.

The research carried out by **APWLD, Thailand**, found through a survey in Taiwan and Hong Kong that the mobile phone is a vital tool to garner information, communicate and organise, for migrant women domestic workers. The study highlights the need for policy makers to look at the right to communicate and hence, the right to access communication tools and platforms as basic rights, especially for migrant women domestic workers. It elaborates the ways in which barriers to access take place in the social and regulatory practices, providing relevant policy recommendations.

The team from **Women and Media Collective** studied marginalised women's engagement with different forms of new media in the Sri Lankan context. The study offers a critique of the impact of state ICT policies on women's engagement with new media. It also discusses how alternative, women-owned, local media spaces can enable women to come together and create the context for them to articulate their perspectives on democracy and citizenship.

The **India** team created a network of women leaders in local governance through a digital platform, *Gramamukhya*, providing an innovative point of departure for catalysing a sense of solidarity among the women and a connection to the women's movement in Kerala. The potential of ICTs was harnessed to provide alternative spaces for the articulation of women's voices.

The team from **China** used qualitative methods to study the emerging techno-social paradigm in the Chinese context in relation to women's engagement and practice of citizenship, online. Their study explores the dynamics of the multiple counter-publics and alternative public spheres in Hong Kong and Guangzhou, two distinctly different cities under the regimes respectively, of post-colonialism and authoritarianism.

The **Filipino** team undertook an action research project, which sought to explore whether and how ICTs can play a role in influencing lawmakers both directly and through the mobilisation of public opinion, to pass a reproductive health law that accounts for the realities of those most in need of access to sexual and reproductive health services and rights.

Box 2. Think-pieces from the CITIGEN-ASIA programme

The CITIGEN-ASIA network invited scholars to explore a key idea that can offer a critical feminist perspective on the connection between the network society and feminist action.

Heike Jensen, in her piece, argues that prevalent discussions on Internet governance and citizenship are gender-blind. She therefore finds a feminist unpacking of communication rights and censorship as well as privacy and surveillance instructive in locating power and politics in the network society discourse.

Margarita Salas offers a critique of the feminist movements of Central America, analysing their distance from the information society debates and inability to grapple with the structural aspects of ICTs. She explores how feminist movements have used ICTs in their struggles, including against the Central American Free Trade Agreement, but have neglected the information society policy arena.

Desiree Lewis and **Crystal Orderson's** think piece outlines how alternative and new media driven mainly by black women in the southern African region have sought to address the limitations of mainstream traditions in the representation of the issue of sexual violence. The authors also look at how social media and mobile-based networks can be relevant for activism.

Supinya Klangnarong talks about the 'free culture' among netizens in her think piece on contemporary Thai society. How this 'free culture' challenges traditional values and authoritarian/conservative mindsets, and whether the common identity of netizens is gender inclusive, is the key focus of her enquiry.

Farida Shaheed seeks to understand how emerging techno-social paradigms shaped by new ICTs do, and can, recast the citizenship of women in a deeply patriarchal society like Pakistan. Acknowledging that ICTs are communication tools that facilitate social organisation, she also reminds us that access to ICTs as public sphere/space does not necessarily translate into shifting paradigms of citizenship in favour of women; outcomes depend on who is using such media, and with what agenda in mind.

society was an urgent imperative (http://gender-is-citizenship.net/sites/default/files/citigen/CITIGEN_Workshop%20Report.pdf). In early 2012, the knowledge outputs of the CITIGEN-ASIA research network were ready. A research validation meeting was organised at the National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bengaluru (India) to revisit the research findings and re-map the analytical field along with new and old members of the network. How the findings of CITIGEN-ASIA can reframe feminist knowledge and praxis in this emerging domain was at the core of the discussions. The report of this workshop captures these conversations on, and framings of, network society (http://gender-is-citizenship.net/sites/default/files/citigen/uploads/CITIGEN_RVM_complete.pdf). The wisdom from the collective works of CITIGEN-ASIA points to how the still-nebulous contours of emerging information societies arise in and through situated, social experiences. While some technological propensities may be a given, the frontier for feminist inquiry is in the subversive spaces where the technological is always appropriated by the social, and new meanings are continuously emergent. The research programme also shows how the question of appropriation of digital spaces connects to foundational questions that concern corporate and state control and ownership of these spaces. While communities and solidarities in the digital ecology push the boundaries of space, state authority (surveillance and censorship) and corporate hegemony (the capitalist logic of Web 2.0 platforms, search engines, mobile networks, etc.) constrain the meanings of 'participation' and 'membership' in these networks of choice. It may be possible for women to create 'alternative' spaces and strengthen their agency through digital technologies. However, the open spaces of small networks in the big, global digital network that subsumes them cannot be truly open unless they are protected from corporate exploitation and expediency, as well as state authoritarianism and tyranny. These guarantees presuppose democratic and participatory governance of the network society and its constitutive digital elements, with appropriate public policies at national, transnational and global levels that enable communities of solidarity to form and sustain as truly open, 'public' spaces.

> ***I would like to express my thanks to IT for Change for facilitating an excellent workshop. It was really useful and inspiring. The kindness of the team was keenly felt and appreciated. Overall, we feel that this collaboration has been just what Women and Media Collective needed at this point in our work and our lives!***
>
> *Sepali Kottegoda, Director, Women and Media Collective*

Unfortunately, appropriate public policies in this area are conspicuous by their absence at national and global levels. CITIGEN-ASIA is now on its final lap and in the upcoming months, the synthesis report from the programme is expected to be released. The outputs of the research have been reproduced in shorter versions, including as policy briefs and summaries (http://gender-is-citizenship.net/citigen/policy_brief and http://gender-is-citizenship.net/sites/default/files/citigen/uploads/Think_Pieces.pdf). Also, a collaboration with *Zubaan* Books, an independent, non-profit publishing house is being explored, to compile the research in an accessible form for wider dissemination.

India-Based Research to Influence Policy and Practice

The past couple of years have also seen a focus on policy research in the Indian context. Along with Dr. Lisa McLaughlin from Miami University, we had initiated a deeper enquiry around the question of women's empowerment in relation to ICT enterprises, through a collaborative research project. The study looked at the *Akshaya* project of the Government of Kerala and also AWAKE, a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) in Bengaluru that works for women entrepreneurs. The research (http://itforchange.net/WE-IT_draftreport), completed this year, has found that ICT policies that aim to include women through developmentalist approaches to enterprises, end up co-opting them as sub-contracted agents of the state. Such approaches create a paradox where women with low-end Information Technology (IT) skills make forays into the public sphere as 'entrepreneurs' running IT services shops, but their status as data entry workers dependent on job-works from the state leaves them bereft of both bargaining power as empowered workers and of autonomy over their own labour. Further, state incentives for girls in engineering colleges at the cost of investments in creative skill-building among poorer and less educated young women reinforce and perpetuate a job market stratified by class divides. Therefore, the grand narrative of empowerment through ICTs needs to be unpacked for the manner in which policies do and do not support new pathways for transformative change and gender equality. The study also found that NGOs supporting women entrepreneurs would need to look at becoming a stronger political voice that can engage in policy level dialogue.

IT for Change also initiated a study to scope out information centres, run by NGOs and the government, examining the possibilities for using telecentres as spaces for women's political education and citizenship. Preliminary insights indicate that the nature of the network space and its possibilities for structural power shift are still not completely grasped by NGOs and the government. For instance, community telecentres run by NGOs may not necessarily be designed to privilege claims-making by marginalised women. Even if they do create channels for access to public information, they may not be able to visualise 'telecentre networks' as a new, strategic opportunity, to further the objectives to mobilise and organise women. Instead, state efforts may, through large-scale data management processes, use telecentres for targeting individual benefits and co-opting NGOs for operational reach and 'success'. However, their lack of focus on bringing to the fore the voices of the most marginal women into governance and public service delivery can result in an unequal partnership between civil society and the state in the governance arena.

> ***Our collaboration with IT for Change has allowed us to benefit from a community of researchers and thinkers who engaged, challenged and influenced our work. We developed new advocacy positions that we have taken globally on migrant domestic worker rights. We expanded our own approach to ICT as an organising tool but also as a politicised and contested space. Thanks so much to IT for Change for the opportunity to engage in thoughtful research and discussion around ICT and democracy from a feminist perspective. It expanded our capabilities!***
>
> *Kate Lappin, Regional Coordinator, APWLD*

Women-Gov – A Response to Top-Down e-Gov

In early 2012, IT for Change embarked on laying the ground for a new action research process - a three-country project, 'Women-Gov' (http://gender-is-citizenship.net/women-and-governance/). The project grew from the

shared enthusiasm among IT for Change and our partners to use ICTs for making local democracy and governance work for women. 'Women-Gov' seeks to address the de-contextualised and de-politicised discourse of e-governance, through an alternative feminist practice of technology that can bring the voices of the poorest and most marginalised women into mainstream discourse. The programme will work with local NGOs in India, Brazil and South Africa that are engaged in promoting the rights and entitlements of marginalised women to examine how digital technologies can be suitably employed for their empowerment. Using an action research approach, this project posits four vectors of gendered power shifts – informational, communicative, associational and collective action, vis-à-vis processes of local democracy and governance.

Sangha *members during a recording in the field.*

In India, IT for Change will continue to partner with *Mahila Samakhya* Karnataka, our close ally, in community informatics praxis through *Prakriye*, our field unit. We will work with the inspiring dalit women leaders of *Samakhya*'s local collectives. Instituto NUPEF (http://nupef.org.br/) from Brazil and the New Women's Movement - Young Women's Chapter in South Africa will be our partners in the other research sites. The lead researchers in these countries will be Graciela Selaimen from Brazil, and Desiree Lewis and Crystal Orderson from South Africa.

In February 2012, the partners met in Bengaluru to explore ideas for the action research. Since then, the projects have begun groundwork with their respective constituencies. A wider meeting of the researchers along with resource persons is expected to take place in May, in order to brainstorm the specifics of the intervention and action research.

Advocacy and Networking

Our impact in pushing the envelope on engendering information society debates with Southern feminist content and, conversely, bringing a structural and analytical lens of the network society context into feminist discussions has become more visible over the years. We are making an impact in diverse spaces as our inputs are sought for global and local policy and social change processes. For instance, we are actively engaged in academic spaces:

- Chloé Zollman and Arpita Joshi made a presentation (http://gender-is-citizenship.net/sites/default/files/citigen/MobilePlus_Presentation.pdf) entitled 'Recasting the potential of mobile phones for gender equality' at the MobilePlus Conference, organised by the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (Chennai), in September 2011. The presentation reflected a nuanced perspective on 'going mobile', deconstructing the celebratory tone of the rhetoric around the mobile revolution.

- Following her presentation and participation in the conference on 'Gender equity policies - New scenarios, actors and articulations' (Buenos Aires, Argentina in November 2010), Anita Gurumurthy wrote a chapter entitled 'Scenarios, actors and articulations - A feminist, network society reading', which includes insights from CITIGEN, for a publication by The Latin American School of Social Sciences (FLACSO), called 'Gender Equity in prospective: research and policies'.

- The fifth international conference on Information and Communication Technologies and Development (ICTD 2012) hosted at the Georgia Institute of Technology was held in March 2012 in Atlanta, USA. CITIGEN-ASIA held an open session titled, 'How the information society recasts women's citizenship – Stories from the CITIGEN programme' at the conference, using a combination of video clips and presentations from the network members (http://gender-is-citizenship.net/citigen/News_and_Events#ICTD).

In addition to the academic spaces, we have strived to remain relevant to activist agenda:

- With APWLD, we have generated interest around how their activism in the region can embrace digital technologies. Not only did APWLD participate as one of the core research teams in the CITIGEN-ASIA programme, but they have also been collaborators in many other spaces, including ICTD 2012, mentioned above. APWLD invited other CITIGEN-ASIA teams to their 'Women in Politics' Conference held in East Timor in September 2011 to reflect on the issues and challenges that women's participation in politics has thrown up. We were invited again to build connections with the Asia Pacific Feminist Forum organised by APWLD in Chiang Mai, Thailand in December 2011. Anita Gurumurthy represented the network and anchored a participatory session with activists from the region on 'Using technology to empower women'.

> ***"We've been working with IT for Change in different spaces and initiatives for some years, and the exchange and interactions has brought to our team valuable learning, important experiences and a strengthening feeling of solidarity. Nupef and IT for Change share many similar views about the most pressing challenges of our times, as NGOs from the global South facing powerful forces while pushing - in several arenas - for the respect and defense of human rights, taking into special consideration the needs of the most poor, excluded and vulnerable people. Nupef feels honoured in being a partner of IT for Change.***
>
> *Graciela Selaimen, Coordinator, Instituto Nupef*

- At the sixth Internet Governance Forum in September 2011, we participated in a pre-event workshop on 'Internet Governance and Women's Rights' organised by the Association for Progressive Communications (APC). The emerging findings of CITIGEN-ASIA were shared.

- Nandini C. participated in the Southern Regional Conference organised by National Mission for the Empowerment of Women, in Bengaluru, held March 15-16, 2012. The conference was mainly a discussion forum for government officials, activists, NGOs and academics to deliberate on strategies for enabling a suitable convergence of policy and institutional frameworks for women's empowerment.

Our participation in global forums has also been a useful way to 'mainstream' our perspectives:

- Anita Gurumurthy attended the UN Women workshop on 'Leading Innovations for Gender Responsible Service Delivery' in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in June 2011. She spoke on 'What information and communication technologies can do for gender responsive service delivery' (http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un-dpadm/unpan046612.pdf), presenting IT for Change's field-based experiences through *Prakriye* and the CITIGEN-ASIA programme.

- In response to an invitation, IT for Change participated in an e-discussion on 'New media and democratic space' organised by the United Nations Development Programme's Asia Pacific Regional Centre. The emerging insights from the CITIGEN-ASIA programme were presented here (http://gender-is-citizenship.net/sites/default/files/citigen/e-discussion_on_social_media_and_democratic_space%20.pdf).

Looking Ahead

The coming year will emphasise the process of consolidating the insights from our research in the past couple of years. We plan to disseminate writings about our field efforts through *Prakriye*, on the women and ICT enterprises discourse, and on the design of women's empowerment programmes on the ground. We will author articles and essays that can provide an analytical perspective. The work with *Zubaan* Books will enable a revisiting and synthesising of the work done through CITIGEN-ASIA, thus contributing to Southern feminist theory building efforts in the emerging arena of network society politics. The 'Women-Gov' project promises to take us back to the litmus test of our relevance. We will engage in ethical experimentation of techno-social methodologies including Geographic Information System (GIS) and mobile phones to see how women's struggles for accountable governance are shaped and influenced by feminist ICT frameworks. Finally, we envision that our strategic dialogues with feminist activists and scholars from the global South will continue, as we also step up our national level advocacy on radical approaches to development in the network society that privilege the voices of women.

Deepening Democracy, Strengthening Governance

Exploring the potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to bring about institutional and structural reform in governance has been a key area of work for IT for Change. We believe that ICTs offer a range of possibilities to make governments more responsive, accountable and participatory for the communities they serve. ICTs have a special potential in the areas of strengthening local governance institutions, enhancing public service delivery and engaging citizens meaningfully in the processes of governance. In India, unfortunately, most e-governance initiatives have been limited by a narrow vision that has over-emphasised the techno-managerial concern of enhancing efficiency in service delivery. Such initiatives have mostly relied on private sector partnership, overlooking the immense potential of community-owned processes and infrastructure of e-governance.

Our research and advocacy efforts have been aimed at influencing the mainstream e-governance discourse to move beyond the efficiency and cost-saving paradigm. We have primarily examined the question of how ICTs can be used strategically in the design of e-governance programmes to establish citizens as the 'owners' of the governance system, and thus take forward the ideals of democracy.

In 2011-2012, our research study on the Common Service Centres (CSCs) scheme of the Government of India examined the question of whether a private sector led system can address the real issues of governance reform in India. We also carried out a study for the Karnataka Knowledge Commission, on 'Developing an institutional model for community knowledge centres', to identify design guidelines for establishing community telecentres at various rural locations across Karnataka. One of the major highlights of this year was our work as part of the Task Force on Proactive Disclosures under the Right to Information Act 2005, constituted by the Department of Personnel and Training, Government of India.

As part of our advocacy and networking efforts, we organised a workshop on 'Community Information and Service Centres: A new village institution for governance and democracy' in order to discuss how different telecentre models may be required to addresses different set of community development imperatives. We also coordinated a study visit for a delegation from the Government of Mongolia, to enable them to understand the Indian e-governance scenario.

Research

Review of the Common Service Centres Scheme of the Government of India

This year, we continued our research study on examining the implementation of the CSCs scheme of the Government of India. CSCs are ICT-enabled village level kiosks set up through a public-private partnership model under the National e-governance Plan (2006). These Centres provide e-governance services such as utility bill collections and issue of certificates to rural communities, along with a range of private services. The main actors in this scheme are companies termed as the Service Centre Agencies (SCAs) that are selected through a competitive bidding process. The SCAs take the responsibility for selecting entrepreneurs at the village level and training them for setting up and running the village level CSCs. The scheme envisages that the SCAs will build linkages with government departments and private companies so that an increasing number of government and business services can be delivered through the village level centres in a digitised manner, enabling the village-level entrepreneurs to earn an adequate income. By the end of 2012, the Government of India plans to set up 250,000 CSCs across the country. It claims that close to 90,000 centres are already running.

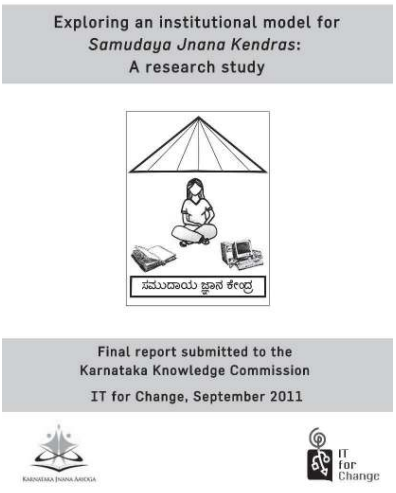
> ***IT for Change's study entitled 'Exploring an Institutional Model for* Samudaya Jnana Kendras' *helped us to understand the information, learning and knowledge needs of communities and steps for establishing community knowledge centres at the grass-roots level. The institutional model for such centres proposed in the said report was useful for us, in making recommendations to the government.***
>
> *Prof. M. K. Sridhar, Executive Director and Member-Secretary, Karnataka* Jnana Aayoga

Our study focussed on addressing the question of whether a private sector led system can address the real issues of governance reform in India. Since 2010, we have observed the progress of the scheme in the states of Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Chattisgarh. Preliminary findings from our field research reveal that the private companies involved in this scheme expectedly focus largely on building a successful business, and for this purpose, keep prodding the entrepreneurs to continually seek avenues that can draw the greatest profit. This means that considerations of equity and social justice take a back seat, producing a deep distortion in what may become the dominant governance outreach system in India.

The most useful potential of ICTs in terms of enabling the participation of communities is fully disregarded in this scheme since efforts towards facilitating such participation cannot be subsumed under revenue generating models. We find that there is a huge mismatch of expectations among various actors in the CSC eco-system – the community, intermediary companies, village level entrepreneurs and government departments whose services are supposed to be delivered by the CSCs. It does not appear that the flaws of the CSC scheme can be eliminated just by taking a few corrective actions, as is currently being attempted by the government. The best option will be to devote the CSC scheme just to providing private services to rural communities, along with some public services where a fee-based model can be justified. There needs to be another countrywide initiative that is devoted to improving participatory process in governance, along with strengthening the *Panchayati Raj* (self-governance) system. The findings from this research study are being consolidated and finalised and will be completed in the next year.

Developing an Institutional Model for Community Knowledge Centres

As part of our work to influence the design of e-governance programmes, we undertook a research study for the Karnataka Knowledge Commission (KKC), aimed at developing an appropriate institutional model for *Samudaya Jnana Kendras* (SJKs), or community knowledge centres. Such centres are proposed to be set up in various rural locations across the state of Karnataka. The Commission envisaged SJKs as the loci for a new set of community-based processes that can build extensive knowledge linkages within and between all sections of local communities, as well as knowledge linkages between local communities, on one hand, and government agencies at the block and district level, and experts who hold technical/subject knowledge, on the other.



The report outlines the research findings and a proposed model for community knowledge centres.

Over a period of eight months, we conducted extensive field work with communities in Mandya and Koppal districts, held consultations with grass-roots development workers in Koppal and Mysore districts, and interviewed government staff of the agricultural extension programme, continuing education centres scheme and *gram panchayat* libraries of the state of Karnataka. We studied the information, learning and knowledge needs at community level as well as the micro-level dynamics around local knowledge processes. We also analysed the effectiveness of existing government

A focus group discussion held at Koppal district as part of the research study on community knowledge centres.

institutions in addressing the information and knowledge needs of communities.

The project also involved case study analyses of a variety of telecentre initiatives across the country such as M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation's village knowledge centres, the *Akshaya* scheme of the Kerala Government, and the telecentres set up by the Kutch *Nav Nirman Abhiyan* in Gujarat. It enabled us to understand the trade-offs between standardisation and contextualisation of knowledge, and community-end processes, in the development of knowledge systems. Furthermore, it shed light on the difficulties in reconciling service delivery functions and knowledge development objectives, in the design process of ICT-enabled community level centres.

The research findings revealed the need to keep the following structural elements in mind for designing any institutional model for community knowledge centres:

- Separating service delivery and information-knowledge functions, to the extent possible;

- Keeping the centres autonomous from the local governance agencies;

- Community ownership and management of the centres;

- Autonomy in local level functioning with resource support and guidance from a dedicated agency to be set up by the state government;

- Co-funding by different government departments whose informational functions will be served by the centres;

- Involvement of NGOs in resource support, monitoring and capacity building of SJK functionaries

Our report, outlining the research findings and a proposed model for the community knowledge centres, was accepted by the Karnataka Knowledge Commission in January 2012. The Commission has recommended to the state government that community knowledge centres be set up in the state. It has identified the Department of Rural Development and *Panchayati Raj* as the nodal agency for this process. The report can be accessed from the websites of IT for Change (http://itforchange.net/node/969) and the Knowledge Commission.

> ***I am glad to note that IT for Change has been associated with* Akshaya *activities particularly as part of their study on dissemination of information at the grass-roots level. Dissemination and e-governance being the major initiatives of the present day, your endeavour is relevant and attuned to the aspirations of the masses utilising ICTs in an effective, efficient and innovative way.***
>
> ***Mini E. R., Assistant District Coordinator,* Akshaya, *Ernakulam***

Advocacy and Networking

Community Information and Service Centres: A New Village Institution for Governance and Democracy

IT for Change organised a two day workshop on 'Community Information and Service Centres: A New Village Institution for Governance and Democracy' between 30-31 May, 2011 (http://itforchange.net/CSC workshop). Department of Information Technology, Government of India, and the Indian Institute of Management, Bengaluru, partnered with us in organising the workshop. The workshop brought together policy makers, research scholars and practitioners from various parts of the country, for focused discussions on the

role of ICT-enabled village information and service centres.

Discussions at the workshop revealed how conflicting expectations hoisted on the idea of a telecentre have affected the CSC scheme. Under this scheme, the village level telecentre is expected to be a service delivery centre, a hub for the information economy and also function as an anchor for knowledge processes along with leveraging possibilities for citizen participation and strengthening the self-governance system! The discussions focused on possible ways of separately addressing the respective imperatives for service delivery, meeting the community's information and knowledge needs, and strengthening local self-governance. It was suggested that three different e-governance initiatives should address these very different imperatives. Later, three sub-groups separately deliberated on each of these imperatives and the respective institutional needs. The workshop also discussed how decentralisation efforts were being frustrated by vested interests. It also examined issues pertaining to the politics of information and knowledge.

Task Force on Proactive Disclosures under the Right to Information Act

IT for Change was asked to be a part of the Task Force on effective implementation of the proactive disclosure provisions of the Right to Information (RTI) Act, set up by the Department of Personnel and Training, of the Government of India. We led the digital technologies track of the Task Force's work. As a member of the Task Force, we organised a regional consultation workshop in Bengaluru in June 2011. Some of the main recommendations that emerged were: The need for displaying extensive information on the websites at all levels of government, following open technical standards, and the need for user-centric presentation of online information. The insights from the consultation were presented as a report to guide the Task Force's deliberations (http://itforchange.net/task_force_effective_implementation_RTI). Later, in July 2011, we helped co-organise the national level consultations on implementation of Section 4 of the RTI Act on the basis of which the final report of the Task Force was written. We collated contributions for and wrote the draft of the chapter on use of information technology. We also suggested setting up a common RTI portal for all government departments, a suggestion that has been included in the Task Force's report. We also made important contributions to other sections of the report, especially the all-important part on monitoring and enforcement aspects.

Mongolian Delegation's Visit to Study e-Governance in India

As part of our commitment to explore new possibilities on how ICTs can make governments more responsive and accountable to the communities they serve, we organised a study visit on e-governance for a 17-member delegation from Mongolia. This delegation was led by the Deputy Chief of the Cabinet Secretariat Mr. Nyamjav Darjaa, Government of Mongolia, and included members of Mongolian government and civil society. The study visit was organised between 18th and 26th of November, 2011, in partnership with Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC), South Asia.

Mongolian delegates interacting with sangha *women during their visit to Mysore district, who own, manage and operate a village information centre under IT for Change's* Mahiti Manthana *project.*

The study visit was organised (http://itforchange.net/Mongolian_delegation_study_visit) with the primary aim of enabling the participants to witness

and understand e-governance initiatives in India. It was hoped that the ensuing learnings could aid in informing the implementation of the One Stop Shop programme (OSS) in Mongolia, funded by the SDC. The OSS programme attempts to bring about single window convergence of service delivery in Mongolia. The study visit hoped to identify lessons learnt for institutional design of ICT-enabled convergent service delivery. It also aimed at exposing participants to different monitoring and evaluation frameworks for public service delivery.

> ***"IT for Change organised a study visit for a delegation from Mongolia in order to learn from India's diverse experiences with ICT-based service delivery models. In particular, the Mongolian delegation was interested to understand the functioning of different 'one-stop-shop' type service delivery centres, which the delegation visited together with IT for Change, throughout the country. Both the organisation and the content of the study visit were very professionally handled by IT for Change. The Mongolian delegation was particularly impressed with the deep knowledge of the staff at IT for Change in the areas of both ICT and service delivery, which is a unique combination. We would like to thank IT for Change for the fruitful cooperation, and we hope to be working together again in the future.***
>
> *Diepak Elmer, Deputy Country Director, Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation*

The design of the study visit was firmly rooted in the experiential learning framework. Hence, care was taken to ensure that the study visit involved a combination of expert lectures, interviews with e-governance officials and field experts as well as guided field visits to some e-governance initiatives in India. Field visits were conducted to the *Akshaya* project in Kerala, Mission Convergence project of the Government of Delhi and IT for Change's field project in Mysore, Karnataka. Presentations were made by a Senior Secretary from the Evaluation and Monitoring Unit of the Cabinet Secretariat of Government of India, a director of the Centre for e-Governance, Karnataka, officials of Kerala IT Mission, and a director from the Department of IT, Government of India, as well as by a team member of the Public Affairs Centre, Bengaluru, and the directors of IT for Change.

We were later informed by members of SDC Mongolia that there has been a considerable impact of the study visit on further plans to consolidate the OSS, especially to introduce ICTs. Pilot projects are being planned in this regard, incorporating some learnings from the study visit.

Looking Ahead

Over the next year, we seek to further strengthen our advocacy work with the Department of Information Technology, Government of India, and other central government agencies like the Department of Rural Development and the *Bharat* Broadband initiative of the Department of Telecom that have interest in ICT-based community-end infrastructure. We also plan to engage with state governments, especially in Karnataka and other southern states. We will continue our collaboration with donor agencies like United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN Women and SDC, with whom we have existing relationships. We will also continue in our efforts to engage actors from the development and governance sectors by catalysing a network that can continually take note and act on emergent issues relating to e-governance in India.

On the research front, we plan to carry out four key research initiatives, next year. We will first carry out the important task of mapping the overall developments in the areas of e-governance and ICTs for development, building overall analytical frameworks. Secondly, we will compile examples of ICT-based initiatives that provide useful learning in different areas, to build theoretical and practical guidelines. A third research study will examine how the dominant scheme of e-governance in India is creating deep architectural changes to our governance systems, pushing towards privatisation of what are considered core public functions. Interestingly, this is happening in a manner that not only has no political mandate (there is no e-governance policy in India) but also with little involvement from civil society. A fourth research will look into how community-based ICT-enabled infrastructure, if designed with clear focus on equity and social justice, can bring government closer to the people, in contrast to the dominant model of profit-based initiatives.

Internet Governance – Locating Power and Politics

The Internet plays a key role in defining emerging social structures and systems, and therefore, the issue of its governance becomes paramount. The Internet is inherently global, and thus its governance has important global dimensions. In the past, global political and economic domination was maintained largely through military force, and later, by control over capital. Over the last few decades, creating and asserting intellectual property has become the mechanism of choice for this purpose. The information society is characterised by a shift of control in the direction of shaping and managing the socio-technical architecture, which increasingly underpins our interactions. Through such control, the basics of social life are sought to be influenced, and those who are able to exercise the socio-technical levers of such control gain phenomenal social, economic, cultural and political advantage. Internet governance is about these controls, and about the required political agency of the global and sub-global publics in this regard. IT for Change works for establishing legitimate democratic political institutions in the area of Internet governance.

2011-2012 was an important year for IT for Change, both for contributing to possibilities of actual institutional shifts in the global Internet governance arena, as well as influencing the discourse from a Southern perspective.

Democratising Global Internet Governance — Key Steps Taken

Over the past year, IT for Change helped define new contours of the debate on institutions of global governance of the Internet. This was a vital contribution to the overall discourse. Currently, the global governance of the Internet takes place in four ways: (1) Decisions taken by the major global Internet companies that have global application. These companies do keep an eye on the laws of the country of their incorporation, chiefly the United States (US), but, as can be expected, their decisions are mainly motivated by their business interests. Developing countries have very little leverage on the architectural decisions made by these companies. (2) An extra-territorial application of US law, mostly achieved through the global reach of mega Internet companies, as was done in the case of WikiLeaks. (3) A private sector led system of the governance of what is referred to as critical Internet resources. This includes the management of the root of the Internet, the domain name system and various other addressing protocols, as well as setting the technical standards. The apex body of this system is the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN), which is subject to the oversight of the US government. (4) Plurilateral treaties among countries of the North on various Internet related policies and policy frameworks, with Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and Council of Europe being important sites for such policy development work.

While the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) laid down some broad guidelines on how to make global Internet governance more democratic and public interest oriented, little has happened since. IT for Change has been working with IBSA (India, Brazil and South Africa) countries to look at the possibility of these three democratic developing countries providing a new, Southern, leadership to break the stalemate in the global Internet governance debate. This debate seems be highly polarised between the US led Northern hegemonic drive and the interests of a few authoritarian countries of the developing world whose main lens to look at the Internet is with regard to the avenues for dissent and political uprising that the Internet seems to open up. In May 2010, on the sidelines of the meeting of the United Nations (UN) Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD), it was at the initiative of IT for Change that IBSA representatives met for the first time to discuss the global Internet governance agenda and the practical possibilities of working together on it. This relationship resulted in a joint IBSA statement in 2010 to the UN through which a clear demand was made for setting up a new or existing agency of the UN to systematically deal with global Internet governance and policy issues. Our role in encouraging and supporting cooperation among the IBSA countries continued at the May 2011 meeting of the CSTD, when an initial plan was proposed by IT for Change along with

a Brazilian civil society organisation and government representative, to hold a workshop in Brazil on 'Global Internet Governance', inviting government and civil society representatives from the three IBSA countries. IT for Change helped organise this workshop which was held in Rio de Janeiro in September 2011 (http://itforchange.net/IBSA_Multistakeholder_meeting_on_Global_IG). Two days of discussions on global governance issues were followed by an inter-governmental meeting, which came up with what has been called as Rio Recommendations. This document, for the first time, unequivocally called for a new UN agency to look into global Internet governance and policy issues, and also described in brief what the remit and functions of such a body would be. This was the first moment of reckoning of the last year in the global Internet governance arena, which shook the establishment. The powers that exercise control over the global Internet but cover it up with invocations to private sector led governance, multi-stakeholderism and the need to save freedom of expression from the authoritarian instincts of many countries in the developing world, felt extremely threatened.

> ***IT for Change has contributed remarkably in the past few years to the analysis of Internet governance structure and functions, as they could be thought out in a multi-polar and equitable relationship between States, international organisations and stakeholder groups. It should be desirable to benefit from more such voices in the continuing debates on Internet governance.***
>
> *Louis Pouzin, one of the founding fathers of the Internet*

The Tshwane declaration (http://itforchange.net/IBSA_Dialogue_Forum_Tshwane_Declaration) of the IBSA summit in South Africa in October 2011 took note of the IBSA Workshop on Global Internet Governance convened in Rio de Janeiro on 1-2 September 2011 and resolved to "jointly undertake necessary follow-up action". It was a proud moment for IT for Change when an initiative that was almost single-handedly triggered by us got such a strong mention in a Summit document, along with a clear commitment to follow up on its outcomes. In its annual meeting in October 2011, the UN General Assembly was supposed to discuss the issue of 'enhanced cooperation' (the term used in the outcome documents of the WSIS, as a placeholder for new global institutions for Internet policy). In the short time available after the Rio meeting, the three IBSA countries could not develop a common substantive proposal for a new institutional framework for global Internet policy. However, India went ahead and made a proposal to the UN for a new 'UN Committee on Internet Related Policies', further expanding on a similar demand made in the Rio Recommendations. India also asked for a CSTD Working Group to be set up to consider its proposal. IT for Change worked closely with the Indian government in developing its proposal. Notably, the demand for a UN Committee on Internet Related Policies was, for the first time, made by IT for Change (though with a few differences) in its submission to the UN in December 2010, when we also demanded a CSTD Working Group on Enhanced Cooperation.

India's proposal for the UN Committee on Internet Related Policies, which came to be called as the CIRP proposal (http://itforchange.net/sites/default/files/ITfC/india_un_cirp_proposal_20111026.pdf) was the second moment of reckoning in the global Internet governance landscape that seems to have altered the terms of the debate unequivocally. The clear mandate from the WSIS for new institutional developments in the area of global Internet policies, which was quite successfully being diffused by the Northern countries and big businesses, once again got sharply focused, six years after Summit in Tunis in 2005, where it was the hottest topic.

At the UN Commission on Science and Technology for Development

As has happened in the past few years, IT for Change was one of the most active civil society players at the 2011 annual meeting of the UN CSTD. At the time of drafting the resolution, the US did not want the inclusion of the phrase describing 'enhanced cooperation' and the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) – a multi-stakeholder policy dialogue forum – as two 'distinct but complementary' mandates from the Tunis Summit. This phrase was introduced on IT for Change's suggestion into the CSTD resolution of 2010, which then also figured in the UN General Assembly resolution. Such an assertion went against the US strategy to conflate the enhanced cooperation and IGF platforms. A multi-stakeholder dialogue forum was thus sought to be presented as also

> ***Public discourse on global Internet governance issues is strongly dominated by a kind of deterministic faith in the capacity of the Internet's technical community, with its strong links to certain governments and corporations, to adequately represent the public interest through legacy administrative structures, technical standards and lightly-regulated markets. IT for Change regularly and effectively challenges this status quo by pointing out how it entrenches the power of privileged actors, and proposes reforms by which Internet governance structures could become more globally democratic and accountable. There are few if any other civil society voices speaking out on these important issues with such trenchant clarity.***
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> *Dr Jeremy Malcolm, Senior Policy Officer, Consumers International*

the place where policies actually get developed, without any need for a legitimate and democratically representative body for this purpose. To understand its deeper implication, one may try to imagine what if, in India, an 'open' multi-stakeholder platform 'decides' that it represents the community's voice and is henceforth entitled to develop policies instead of the parliament!

In the information society arena, the strategy of the North for perpetuating its hegemony is to use the support of big business, the so called 'technical community' and compliant civil society organisations, to subvert democratic institutions of global governance. This is done in the name of giving non-governmental stakeholders a 'voice'. The recent move for an industry association led 'India IGF', which we were successful in resisting, can also be seen as an attempt to capture the emerging participatory spaces in the information society by neo-liberal forces. In the same spirit, we also actively argued against the, so-called, Asia Pacific Regional Internet Governance Forum, which is led by the technical and business sector and has similarly sought to capture the space of public participation by a few groups with a narrow business-technical view of the Internet governance arena. We seek truly participatory IGFs at the global, regional and national levels, and will continue to strive towards building the innovative institutions of IGFs on solid democratic grounds.

Improving the UN Internet Governance Forum

IT for Change has been one of the five civil society members of the CSTD Working Group on Improvements to the IGF. Over 2010-2011, we presented our own extensive proposals for IGF improvements (http://itforchange.net/UNCSTD_WGIIGF_input_papers) and also worked closely with the Indian government to develop what came to be called as the 'India proposal' (http://itforchange.net/india_report_wgiigf). This was a very elaborate proposal for improving the IGF to become a path-breaking global institution of deliberative democracy, ensuring very broad public participation in global Internet policy making. Much of the discussions of the Working Group revolved around the 'India proposal'. In May 2011, the CSTD extended the life of the Working Group. During 2011-2012, the group met thrice and in all the meetings IT for Change was very active. Unfortunately, while developing countries had strongly pushed for strengthening the IGF in the first round of meetings of the Working Group, an effort resisted by developed countries and the business community; in the second round, developing countries became rather restrained. They had serious misgivings about the role of the IGF in supplanting rather than supporting democratic global governance systems. This rather justified feeling unfortunately added to the already strong fear among the more authoritatively inclined countries that the IGF will mostly be used to fan human rights issues.

The second round of meetings of the Working Group saw a surprising degree of consensus among government representatives from across North and South, and also business members, for not rocking the status quo with regard to the IGF. Most developing countries had strongly resisted the primacy of a capacity building role for the IGF at the debates before the Tunis Summit, most graphically described in the words of a developing country diplomat, "We don't want developed countries to set up a school for developing countries". Very interestingly, the same countries were now found to insist on a primary capacity-building role for the IGF at the Working Group meetings. They also now joined the developed countries to speak against public funding of the IGF, and against having its outcomes formally communicated to bodies dealing with Internet governance. No one seemed interested in strengthening the IGF; one side (developed countries) did not want to lose its hegemonic positions,

and the other side (developing countries) was not sure of the new role of non-state actors in global governance. This shows how much developing countries have lost confidence and trust in the IGF over the years.

This left the few civil society members of the group in a rather difficult position to try and salvage at least some possibilities of improvements to the IGF. The Working Group meetings become a rather lack-lustre affair with little desire for real change among the overwhelming majority in the room. If the final report still has some useful recommendations, it largely goes back to the first round of meetings of the Working Group, which contributed the basic structure of the final report and gave some meaty language to the draft (The 'India proposal' by far made the largest contribution in this regard). Though most of it got whittled down, what survived constitutes the most important part of the final report of the Working Group.

The final report focuses on 'outcomes' from the IGF, a term that had become contested in the post Summit years. This recommendation, if sincerely followed, should provide avenues of some improvements in the IGF. The report also asks for focus on clear policy questions, with the results of the discussions on these questions required to be reflected in the 'outcome' documents. In fact, one of the most important contributions of the report is its re-affirmation of the primacy of the policy dialogue role of the IGF over its capacity building role. While the mandate from the Tunis Summit is clear in this regard, in the subsequent years, very strong, and somewhat successful, efforts have been made to undermine the primacy of the policy dialogue role.

The report also makes some useful contribution on how the Multi-stakeholder Advisory Group of the IGF should be constituted, especially with regard to making sure that (1) it is not captured by a few powerful stakeholders, and (2) there is an improvement in the representation of the hitherto under-represented groups. The report also stresses the need for complete transparency vis-à-vis the income and expenditure of the IGF. IT for Change will try to monitor closely how the recommendations of the Working Group are carried out.

Annual Internet Governance Forum in Nairobi

IT for Change participated in two pre-events of the Annual Internet Governance Forum in Nairobi in November 2011. A pre-event on 'Internet Rights are Human Rights: Development, Empowerment and Access to the Internet' was co-organised by IT for Change along with Association for Progressive Communications (APC) and the Internet Rights and Principles Coalition. We also participated in another workshop on 'Internet Governance and Women's Rights' organised by APC. IT for Change co-organised a workshop on 'A possible framework for global net neutrality' (http://itforchange.net/IGF_Sep_2011) where we sought to explore various perspectives on the foundational principle of net neutrality and how a global view can be developed on it. We participated in workshops on 'Improving the IGF: how can we get the most out of IGF improvements processes?' and another on 'Global Internet related public policies – Is there an Institutional Gap?' IT for Change also helped organise a workshop on 'Reflections on the Indian proposal towards an IGF 2.0.'

Shaping the Discourse

While this year saw significant outcomes from IT for Change's work in real institutional terms as discussed earlier, our considerable contributions to shaping the global discourse on Internet governance continued. IT for Change is recognised as a key voice presenting a distinctively Southern perspective in this

> ***"When I first got involved in Internet governance, I started out with a very techno-centric viewpoint that was totally blind to the problem that a far too great share of power is in the hand of people with a US perspective. It was primarily contributions from IT for Change that made me realise that this lack of equity in the international distribution of power in Internet governance is a serious problem in itself and an obstacle to sustainable development. Clearly IT for Change is also very influential among governments. For example, recently an expert for Internet governance of a European government gave me his perspective on who is very influential among government representatives, internationally, in this area. He mentioned three civil society persons, among them a director of IT for Change.***
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> *Norbert Bollow, representative of the Swiss Open Systems User Group in international standardisation and Internet governance*

area, that seeks to place issues of economic, social and cultural rights at the same pedestal as civic and political rights. Being foremost a medium of communication and expression, freedom of expression does become a very important right with regard to the Internet. However, Internet is as much a means to redistribute economic, social and cultural advantages, and impacts the right of communities and countries to their self-determined paths of development. As we continue to closely support groups working on freedom of expression issues, our work has also always focused on a political economy perspective on Internet governance.

The primary venue where we contributed to shaping the discourse has been the e-list of the Civil Society Internet Governance Caucus. This is a vibrant global space for discussion of Internet governance issues, perhaps the only one with a global participation of people with both technical and non-technical backgrounds. It is subscribed to by a lot of very influential global Internet governance actors, including among the governments. IT for Change has almost single-handedly helped pull away the veneer of what is projected as a broad civil society consensus on perspectives that simply condone, if not actively support, hegemonic positions of the US and big business. Our interventions, along with those of a few others, have made the debate much more balanced. Since hegemony greatly depends on theoretical and discursive constructions, we have been able to make the debate more balanced by contributing the necessary language, ideas and concepts as well as outlines of alternative institutional and policy models. Often the struggle is at the level of worldview, and against very organised and well-resourced groups, which requires painstaking engagement over a long period. Today, IT for Change is associated with having a relatively clear set of original ideas and positions that frame the debate on most key global governance issues vis-à-vis the Internet.

Informing the Rights Debate

IT for Change was called to be a part of the experts' meeting on 'The Right to Enjoy the Benefits of Scientific Progress and Its Applications' organised by the UN Special Rapporteur on Cultural Rights in Geneva in December 2011. We were specifically requested to contribute perspectives on Internet and other Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). Apart from informing the general discussion, two of our contributions find mention in the final report; one, concerning the need to protect the open architecture of the Internet and another, insights from a case study from Taiwan as a part of our CITIGEN-ASIA project, arguing why access to mobiles should be considered as a basic right from the standpoint of migrant domestic workers.

Looking Ahead

The arena of global governance of the Internet is expected to get even hotter over 2012-2013. The key areas of intense activity and contestation are going to be the meeting of the upcoming International Telecommunication Union, which will review its constitutional provisions, and the annual sitting of the UN General Assembly, around the same time, towards the end of 2012. In addition, the special meeting on 'enhanced cooperation' called on the sidelines of the annual 2012 meeting of the CSTD, and the regular meeting of the Commission, may see interesting developments. IT for Change plans to associate closely with all these events.

We will continue to work closely with key actors in the global Internet governance arena, both from civil society and governments, to try and make progress towards democratic institutions for Internet governance. During the next year, we specifically seek to develop a network of progressive civil society groups, at the global and national level, which can share information and perspectives and together take up causes for advocacy. We also plan to work closely with South Centre, possibly to bring out a newsletter with informed Southern perspectives on global Internet governance issues.

IT for Change also seeks to increase engagements at the national level on Internet governance issues. Apart from developing a network of progressive groups, we seek to specifically make progress on issues like net neutrality, competition issues in the digital space, freedom of expression and need for public interest regulation of global mega Internet companies operating in India. We will also work for an India IGF.

Promoting the 'Public' in Digital Architectures

Public digital infrastructure can be viewed as comprising of three parts; publicly owned software applications, content in the public domain and public connectivity. By 'public' we do not mean state or the government, but what we call as 'network public', a network of public and community institutions that can compositely denote people's (inclusive and universal) ownership against private (exclusive) ownership. Since digital resources are 'non-rivalrous', it takes specific legal and technical efforts to privatise them and make them exclusive and scarce. Whereas collaborative creation and sharing are intuitive to digital processes and can support the creation of an equitable and universal digital environment. There is a need to create wider awareness on the need for 'public' ownership over critical digital infrastructure, for enabling an equitable information society. Over more than thirty years of its existence, the Free Software Movement has developed thousands of software applications that are free to study, share, modify and use. Public Software is defined as 'software that is essential for participating in the digital society and thus needs to be provided to everyone as an universal right and entitlement'. Therefore public software needs to be available for free. We believe that public investment and support is essential to complement efforts of free software communities to create an environment in which free applications are available to all. IT for Change's Public Software Centre works in the areas of capacity building, research and advocacy on public software.

During the year 2011-2012, Pubic Software Centre's efforts in building public software eco-systems focused on institutions of school education, technical education and on Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in the state of Karnataka. Our work to promote public software in school education has been discussed in the chapter on 'Exploring a new model of teacher professional development'. Technical education is the key space for learning about the use and production of software tools. Accordingly, awareness of the possibilities stemming from 'public' ownership over software is critical to create here. Our work with NGOs seeks to spread understanding amongst developmental actors that the nature of software is not a technological issue but something that has significant structural implications for the emerging 'digital' or 'network' society.

Public Software in Technical education

Public Software Centre participated in the Department of Technical Education, Government of Karnataka, and the National Institute for Technical Teachers' Training and Research project to revise the syllabus for the fifth and sixth semesters of polytechnic courses. This revision identified public educational software alternatives to popular proprietary tools, the use of which can support the emergence of a rich learning environment, replacing the scarce and minimalist resource environment created by using expensive proprietary software applications.

We have been asked by the National Institute for Technical Teachers' Training and Research to be part of their capacity building programme, in line with the revised syllabus, to help teachers learn identified public educational software tools. Department of Technical Education has also issued a circular to all polytechnics instructing them to install public educational tools for all subjects, wherever possible, and to seek the support of Public Software Centre in this process.

As a part of this engagement with technical education, we have conducted capacity building workshops for MEI polytechnic and MNTI polytechnic. Our capacity building workshops included introduction to public software along with training on Ubuntu (operating system), LibreOffice (office suite), PhEt and STEP (Science

> ***"We appreciate the value of a shared knowledge that grows by the contribution of myriad users. "No one lights a lamp and hides it under a bowl," says the Bible. Unfortunately that is what is happening with technology. It needs commitment to change this, though the path may be arduous. We congratulate the IT for Change team for their diligent effort.***
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> *Jayadev, Founder and Hon. Secretary,* **Deenabandhu** *Trust*

> ***When we first met the IT for Change team, we knew that we have a lot to learn and indeed, unlearn. Through our initiative of training people living with HIV+ on making Digital Stories, we as well as our participants started using Audacity and Kdenlive frequently. Drupal was very helpful in enabling us in managing our website on HIV, without external support. Now we are using public software with ease and are also exploring different software which we need in our work. We greatly appreciate the efforts of IT for Change in introducing public software to our organisation.***
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> *Shangon Das Gupta, Executive Director, Communication for Development and Learning*

simulations), Geogebra (Mathematics), Scilab (numerical computing), Netbeans (IDE), Drupal (content management system), QCAD and Blender (drawing and animation) public educational software applications. The detailed functionalities of these applications and the proprietary tools that they could replace are available on http://public-software.in/FOSS-applications. In addition, we have also conducted the self-learning 'SELF' workshops, designed and administered by Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Mumbai under the Spoken Tutorial Project which is a part of the National Mission for Education through ICT (NMEICT) programme of Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) to promote Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in higher education. Many faculty members and students in these institutions also participated in these workshops on select public educational tools such as Ubuntu, LaTex, Scilab. On successful completion of an online test they received certification from IIT, Mumbai. As part of our work with the Spoken Tutorial Project, Public Software Centre has developed several video-based tutorials on various educational tools including Geogebra, STEP, QCAD, Audacity, Inkscape, Drupal and Libre Office. All these tutorials can be accessed at http://dte.karnatakaeducation.org.in/?q=Resources_all.

Knowledge Management and Knowledge Networking

The very nature of work of public institutions, aiming at equity and social justice, places an imperative upon them to adopt public software that is accessible to all, especially to the communities that are marginalised. Public Software Centre provides capacity building and support for the institutional adoption of public software by NGOs, through 'Knowledge Management and Knowledge Networking (KMKN) workshops', which aim at enabling them to use a variety of digital tools and processes for their knowledge management as well as networking activities. Communication for Development and Learning (CDL), an NGO, developed its website using Drupal[1] and their partner organisation, Karnataka Network of Positive people (KNP+), learnt how to make and edit audio and video resources using Audacity and KdenLive. *Makkala Jagriti* (another NGO) has been innovating with educational tools in their community learning centres. Various public educational tools have been explored to integrate ICTs into teaching-learning processes in Mathematics (Geogebra, Bruch, KTurtle), languages (SCIM, KHangMan), Science (STEP, Stars, Stellar, Kalzium), Social Science (Marble, Kgeography) and analytical and creative thinking (FreeMind). Two other NGOs, Child Rights Trust and Concerned for Working Children, have also used public software applications in desktop publishing (Scribus), poster making (Inkscape) apart from basic applications such as LibreOffice (office suite), Mozilla Firefox (web browser), Thunderbird (mail client) etc. Most NGOs, due to lack of awareness about alternatives, use proprietary software. Public software can provide NGOs a rich and enabling environment to build internal competencies by exploring large number of free software applications in different areas and expanding their political and practical understanding of the digital phenomenon.

Ganapati Hegde, from CDL, developed their site entirely on Drupal

Advocacy and Dissemination

With support from United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), Public Software Centre produced a film titled 'Transforming Teacher Education with Public Software'. The film is available at http://youtube.com/watch?v=D-kgSW_o9z8&feature=relmfu and has been discussed in more detail in the chapter on education. We gave a talk on 'Public Software and Public Institutions' in an event organised by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) in Bengaluru. IT for Change made a remote presentation[2] to IBSA (India, Brazil, South Africa) Summit at Open World Forum (http://openworldforum.org/) on the role and rationale of public software for public institutions. This video presentation was created through RecordMyDesktop[3], a public software tool which can be used to create simple videos, combining audio with the visual images of the desktop (which can be presentation slides). The Open World Forum is an annual programme that aims to bring academicians and practitioners working on Free and Open Source Software (FOSS) together to share experiences and learnings. We also presented on our work in Education and Public software at the Fourth International FOSS Conference, Kerala, in December 2011 and contributed to the discourse by highlighting the pedagogical benefits of using software resources that support a collaborative and a free sharing environment, processes essential to teaching-learning.

IT for Change provided feedback on the Policy on Device Drivers for Procurement of Hardware for e-Governance[4] of the Department of Information Technology, Government of India which discusses the need for device drivers on public operating systems (GNU/Linux). Enforcement of this policy would help government departments avoid 'vendor lock-in', whereby vendors provide drivers available only for select proprietary products. IT for Change was invited by the National Institute of Smart Government to participate in a training programme on ICTs and governance for mid-level bureaucrats in Indian Institute of Management, Indore. We held a session on public software in governance. The popular discourse on ICTs in governance sees government as a consumer of proprietary digital resources produced by private vendors whereby the government becomes a perennial royalty payer, with no control over these resources. The participants at the session were happy to learn about the possibility of a rich public digital domain which could support universal access as well as community participation. We feel that much more efforts need to go into such awareness building. For just a fraction of the amount being spent on licence fees for proprietary software, large-scale capacity building for government officials on understanding both the political as well as the practical uses of ICTs can be achieved. Our public software resource portal[5] was redesigned to create awareness for public software and support its adoption. A frequently asked questions (FAQ) section was added along with a list of different public software tools available in different domains.

Looking Ahead

We are planning to work with the Ministry of Human Resource Development of Government of India on their 'National Mission for Education through ICT' programme to reach out to more technical educational institutions in Karnataka and with National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF), a Government of India programme to promote vocational education within secondary education to support vocational skill building using public software applications in different areas like desktop publishing, graphics, enterprise ICT support etc. We will continue to work with NGOs to create a network of public institutions adopting and promoting public digital resources and integrating them into their programmatic and advocacy activities. We will also use FrontAccounting and GNU/Khata applications in our financial accounting and add it as well as PSPP (statistical analysis) to our repository of tools that NGOs could adopt.

1 Free tool for content management and website development, with several thousand modules it is easily modifiable and customisable.

2 The presentation can be viewed at: http://youtube.com/watch?v=_hinsvN1vj4&feature=plcp

3 More information can be found on: http://recordmydesktop.sourceforge.net/about.php

4 Feedback at: http://public-software.in/sites/default/new/Feedback_from_IT_for_Change_on_Policy_on_Device_Drivers_for_Procurement_of_Hardware_for_e-Governance_July_2011.pdf

5 http://public-software.in/

Prakriye – Centre for Community Informatics and Development

Seeking an equitable and just information society requires us to go beyond engaging with the macro-level governance of technology architectures. We need to be able to effectively challenge these architectures, by demonstrating how innovative, alternative models can be created at the micro-level, for empowering communities who are otherwise increasingly marginalised in the information society. This has been the primary vision guiding the activities of our field centre* Prakriye*- Centre for Community Informatics and Development.

Prakriye ***partners with Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations working on diverse issues, ranging from empowering women to strengthening livelihoods, to help them avail of the rich possibilities that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) offer for development practice, when implemented in a contextually-appropriate and sensitive manner. The learnings gained from such engagements at the field level are deployed in IT for Change's larger advocacy efforts towards community-centric ICTs for development practice.***

A movie was screened at Andanahalli in Hunsur taluk *where all the MSK and non MSK* sanghas *were gathered together to watch it.*

We have continued our long-standing engagement in Mysore district with the *sanghas* (women's collectives) of *Mahila Samakhya*[1] Karnataka (MSK), in the areas of community radio, community video and community computing. In the area of capacity-building, we continued our work with Communication for Development Learning (CDL), a Bengaluru-based Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) and the Karnataka Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS, for training people living with HIV/AIDS in using videos effectively in their advocacy and internal capacity-building efforts. We also extended support to Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement (SVYM), a Mysore based NGO, in their efforts to set up and launch a community radio station. In the area of education, the *Kishori Chitrapata* (images by adolescent girls) project, launched in 2009, was successfully concluded this year. Right now, we are in the process of consolidating our work with *MSK sanghas* (collectives), through a deepening of our engagement with the community information centres that we set up at the village and block level with *sangha* ownership and management.

Our Work with Mahila Samakhya Karnataka

We continue to work with the *sanghas* of *Mahila Samakhya* Karnataka, in three *taluks* (sub-district units) of Mysore district – H. D. Kote, Hunsur and Nanjangud – using community radio, video and community information centres, to support and strengthen their collective learning-action processes.

This year, we focused on consolidating *Kelu Sakhi*[2], our weekly '*sangha* radio' programme. Radio broadcasts on issues such as child marriage, re-enrolments of school drop-outs and women's health continued to generate heated discussions among communities about the need to understand and respect the aspirations of women.

Also, the community of listeners of the community radio programme has now expanded to include non-*sangha* women, men from the community and even children.

> ***I felt very happy when what I spoke about the* gram panchayat *came on air. All my* sangha *members said, "Devamma is speaking on radio". It felt good to know that my thoughts could be shared with everyone, through* Kelu Sakhi.**
>
> ***Devamma,* sangha *woman from Attiguppe village, Mysore district, India***

On the community video component, we continued our efforts at increasing the collective viewing of the videos produced, as part of our work with *Mahila Samakhya sanghas*. This year, screenings were conducted at *Mahila Samakhya* events at the district level, and the *Namma Mahiti Kendras* (community information centres). This year, for the first time, a *sakhi*[3] (community information centre operator) was involved in the video production, a testimony to further decentralisation of the process. The expectation is that one day every field-level development worker will consider it as a normal and necessary skill to be able to make local videos.

After viewing a film on the experience of blood tests and its relevance that was shot on *sangha* women of Attiguppe village, *sanghas* from Mullur village wanted to go for blood tests and also make their own film about this experience. It is heartening to note how the perception of ownership of the video or cinematic medium, once considered so much a reflection of the outside reality, is growing among *sangha* women. The *sakhi* from the Attiguppe *Namma Mahiti Kendra* (community information centre) assisted the Mullur *sangha* women by filming their entire experience of going for a blood test, with some assistance from the *Prakriye* team. We did not suspect that a film about women undertaking blood tests could be so useful and powerful in the local context. This experience re-affirmed our faith in the potential of locally created videos in catalysing action. It also underlined the fact that it is very difficult to know from the outside what kind of media activity is more important and pertinent in a particular context. This must be discovered from within, which requires appropriate local community processes to be developed over a relatively long period.

We continued our work with the *two Namma Mahiti Kendras* (community information centres) at Attiguppe and Hosavaranchi; and the two block level community information centres (called the *Taluk Mahiti Kendras*) at Hunsur and H. D. Kote *taluks*. This year witnessed the deepening and broadening of information linkages that the centres have created between communities and government departments at the block level, and with non-governmental agencies. The information centres continue to provide information about entitlements from government departments, as well as skill-building and livelihood opportunities to communities. We also came across instances where the centres have enhanced community

Mahiti Kendras: Changing Information Asymmetries

There is a governmental scheme that provides pensions to unmarried women, who are above forty-five years. For this scheme, the *anganwadi*[4] teacher is responsible for identifying the beneficiaries and processing the applications. In Attiguppe, the *anganwadi* teacher had written back to block officials that there are no women who fall under this category in the village, without conducting any enquiries on the ground. She had not even approached the *sanghas* in the village. The *sakhi* at the village information centre heard about this scheme, from the block information centre. She independently enquired with *sangha* members and was able to identify 3-4 eligible beneficiaries from the village. Later on, she also tactfully confronted the *anganwadi* teacher for her non-transparent handling of this issue.

The role of the *Kendras* in the local information ecology is being increasingly recognised by the larger village community and block level officials. A member of the state legislature visited the Hosavaranchi *Kendra* in November 2011 and appreciated its working. There were other visits from groups and organisations who wanted to learn more about the work of the *Namma Mahiti Kendras* – including a study visit from a Mongolian government delegation who were trying to understand the Indian experience of using ICTs to strengthen governance, and a team from the Foundation for Ecological Security (an Indian NGO), who visited our centres to garner insights that could be useful to their efforts towards setting up *Gramina Mahiti Kendras* (resource centres at the village level) in Kolar and Chikkaballapur districts in Karnataka.

> ***It was a great experience to meet a fine team at Prakriye, IT for Change and learn about a project with in-depth conceptualisation and strong community-based process.***
>
> *Bhuvaneswari Mahalingam, Consultant for UNICEF*

members' participation in local governance, such as participation in the *gram sabhas* (the village electorate); as well as instances of the centres changing the information asymmetry vis-à-vis local officials leading to a wider coverage of, and benefit from, social welfare schemes.

ICTs for Education

During 2011-2012, our work with out-of-school adolescent girls (*kishoris*) in Attiguppe and Hosavaranchi villages, as part of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) supported *Kishori Chitrapata* (images by adolescent girls) project, was successfully concluded. *Kishori Chitrapata*, launched in 2009 in partnership with *Mahila Samakhya* Karnataka and *Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan*, has primarily explored the innovative use of ICTs, in particular, videos and photos, in enabling *kishoris* to individually and collectively explore, question and critically engage with their immediate social and cultural milieu. Through the process of critical engagement, it was hoped that *kishoris* could be aided in developing their abilities to creatively negotiate their lives, for fulfilling their aspirations and realising their potential. The first year of the project was dedicated to enrolling the *kishoris*, and creating a sense of confidence and trust among the *kishoris* themselves, and between the *kishoris* and the programme facilitators. From the second year onwards, the project focused on training the girls in still photography and video, especially using these technologies as means to enable the girls to explore critical issues and questions about their lives related to empowerment.

The kishoris *learning how to use the digital camera as part of their training (Mysore district, India)*

This final year of the project, we continued to focus on using technology training as a means for assisting *kishoris* in their learning and critical self-examination processes. Some of the themes we explored were livelihood options for *kishoris*, 'know your village', awareness about the functioning of the local government, critical awareness about how patriarchy operates, and questions of individual and collective identity. The curriculum also dealt with other key subjects such as reflecting upon their body image, as well as understanding adolescence and dealing effectively with its challenges.

In order for *kishoris* from the two project villages to interact with each other, and for the facilitators to conduct intensive training sessions on important subjects, we organised a workshop in the *Prakriye* office, Mysore. This workshop also gave the girls a chance to travel outside their village, which was very significant, considering the enormous restrictions placed on their mobility by their family and the larger community. The workshop organised in Mysore mainly

> ***I had earlier thought of the panchayat as a male space below the peepal tree where elders met to sit and pass judgements. When we visited the gram panchayat office, I realised that this is not the case. I asked the officials present there about the services that exist for girls and women. I was the first to ask a question there!***
>
> *Reetha, one of the* kishoris

focused on enabling the girls to recognise and overcome gender stereotypes, in their immediate contexts as well as in the larger society.

> ***It is very important to have a* sakhi *and not a* sakha *because there is a need to respond sensitively to women's needs. Also, in the male-dominated world, it is an opportunity for the girls like me, and we become role models for other kishoris who would come out.***
>
> ***Tara,* sakhi *at Hosavaranchi* Namma Mahiti Kendra**

The *Kishori Chitrapata* project was concluded in January 2012, by organising a celebration in Hosavaranchi, with the *kishoris*, their parents, other community members and *Mahila Samakhya sangha* women and programme staff. The celebration, which was given the name '*Kishori Chitrapata Habba*' (the adolescent girls' festival) was organised entirely by the *Mahila Samakhya sanghas* in the village. At the event, all the parents spoke about the positive changes the programme had brought to their daughters. *Kishoris* recounted their experiences of the training, in front of their parents and community members. The programme ended with a community screening of some of the films made by the *kishoris*. Our experience with *Kishori Chitrapata* has re-affirmed our faith in constructivist learning processes.

Capacity-Building

Digital Story Telling Workshops with Karnataka Network of Positive People

This year, we continued our digital story telling capacity-building training for members of the Karnataka Network of Positive People (KNP+), which we had initiated in partnership with CDL in 2010. CDL is a Bengaluru-based NGO engaged in media research, training and advocacy efforts. This year, we conducted four workshops for members of KNP+ from across Karnataka, to train them in digital story telling using public software. As the name suggests, digital story telling is a process of telling stories with the help of ICTs, using a montage of images, text, recorded audio narration, video clips and/or music.

A sangha *woman learning to handle a digital camera.*

The overall goals of the workshops were to enable the participants to capture and share their opinions, experiences and inspirational stories on video so that they as individuals and as a community of people living with HIV/AIDS, are motivated and are able to gain confidence and courage in each others positive stories. The project also sought to enable the participants to share these videos with the rest of the world so as to influence the mainstream discourse on people living with HIV/AIDS. At the workshops, the participants learned the necessary technical and conceptual skills for creating their own digital stories, in a powerful and gender sensitive manner.

Capacity-Building for the Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement on Community Radio

We supported the Swami Vivekananda Youth Movement (SVYM), which has recently obtained a community radio licence, in strategising and operationalising their community radio initiative. Capacity-building workshops were conducted on script-writing, recording, content management and the overall community radio strategy for the staff of SVYM, to enable them to fully understand the socio-technical processes that were necessary for shaping community radio into an effective strategy for community development efforts. Their community radio

station '*Jana Dhwani*' (Voice of the people), went live on February 24, 2012.

Looking Ahead

Over 2011-2012, we plan to consolidate our work with the community-based people's organisations – *sanghas* and federations – of *Mahila Samakhya* Karnataka. We are beginning a project supported by International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada, on exploring information society possibilities for women's engagement with local governance. The project involves activities at three project sites, one each in India, South Africa and Brazil. This year *Prakriye's* work will therefore be more specifically focused on exploring the potential of techno-social processes for enhancing women's participation in local governance structures and institutions. We will set up a few more community information centres. We will also be experimenting with newer technologies whose potential is often touted but rarely explored at the grass-roots level in a systematic manner – specifically, the potential of Short Message Service (SMS) networks as a local media, and the opportunities offered by Geographic Information System (GIS) technologies to motivate communities to engage in micro-planning. Meanwhile, we will continue to work towards our mandate of enabling various developmental agencies to understand better the possibilities opened up by community informatics for development.

Confronting Gender Stereotypes

At one workshop organised with *kishoris* in Mysore, participants were divided into four groups. Two groups were asked to go outside and search for objects that represented 'manliness'. The other two groups were asked to search for objects that represented 'femininity'. The girls generally chose to represent the feminine using 'chocolates' and 'flowers', while they used 'cigarette butts' and 'stones' to represent the masculine. We asked the girls to explain their choices – and then the girls came up with their ideas on 'strong, tough' men and 'soft, fragile' women. We then conducted another activity with the four groups, where we asked each group to pick a leader they admired (either from their own village or from anywhere in the world). We asked two groups to pick men leaders and the other two to pick women leaders. After selecting a leader they admired, each group was required to explain the reasons guiding its choice. All groups came up with similar sets of qualities they admired in the leader they selected – honesty, commitment to community welfare, courage, sincerity, sensitivity and ability to inspire other people around him/her. Then, we asked the group – Are these qualities gender specific? Can women become leaders just as men can? Then, through a process of dialogue, we enabled them to reflect on the earlier exercise, as well as on questions of gender stereotyping in their community. We concluded the workshop by watching a popular film '*Kalasipalaya*' with the girls, and enabling them to reflect on gender stereotypes in popular media.

Over the next year, we also plan to improve linkages with other sites in India where important community informatics work is being done. We plan to hold workshops to connect, and cross-learn among, these projects. We also plan to build our capacities to be able to provide short-term support and hand-holding to initiatives in other parts of the country.

1 *Mahila Samakhya* is a pan-Indian programme of the Government of India that aims at mobilising and collectivising rural women belonging to socially and economically disadvantaged groups, with the aim of 'education for empowerment'.

2 *Kelu Sakhi* which means 'Listen, my friend', is a weekly radio programme that is broadcasted over the Karnataka State Open University FM channel in Mysore, between 9:00-9:30 pm every Monday. The programme is produced by IT for Change, as part of its work with women's collectives of the *Mahila Samakhya* programme.

3 *Sakhi* (which literally means friend), refers to the adolescent girls who work as the information intermediaries in the community information centres set up by IT for Change.

4 *Anganwadi* (courtyard shelter) is a government sponsored child-care centre in India, that caters to children in the age group of zero to six years.

Development in the Information Society

IT for Change has been contributing original perspectives to the way development is getting recast as we move into the information society context. In this regard, we have critiqued and resisted models that have leveraged the emergent social architectures to embed neo-liberal ideas and processes for private gain. At the same time, we have also contributed new theoretical and practice models for conceptualising development in the information society that best employ information society opportunities for transformative change while adhering to traditional cornerstones of equity and social justice.

In 2011-2012, IT for Change attended two important global meetings that looked at new meanings and conceptions of development in the information society. We contributed a critical commentary to a research work on open data and open media for development. We also wrote a book chapter critiquing the concept of 'open development'.

Acting Locally, Engaging Globally

IT for Change organised a panel with Information and Knowledge Management Emergent (IKME), a Europe-based research and communication programme, at the conference organised by the Development Studies Association along with the European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes on 'Rethinking Development in an Age of Scarcity and Uncertainty', which was held in York (United Kingdom) between 19-22 September, 2011. The panel was titled 'How are Digital Technologies Transforming Development?'. Anita Gurumurthy was a part of the panel. Her presentation on 'Bottom of the Pyramid and Other Dangerous Development Delusions of the Information Age' was received with interest. Co-panelists Mike Powell from IKME, United Kingdom, and Evangelia Berdou, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, United Kingdom contributed complementary perspectives examining the ideas and ideologies that new ICTs are bringing to the development sector, looking at the challenges and possibilities in terms of equitable development. The panel was chaired by Robin Mansell, London School of Economics, United Kingdom.

IT for Change was part of the inaugural meeting of BRICS Internet Research Group in Brazil.

In March 2011, IT for Change attended the inaugural meeting of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa political grouping) Internet Research Group in São Paulo, Brazil. This initiative was co-conceptualised by IT for Change. The inaugural workshop was coordinated by the Information Systems Group of the School of Economics, Administration and Accounting of the University of São Paulo and hosted by the Brazilian Internet Steering Committee. It was held in association with the Journal of Community Informatics. This initiative conformed to the BRICS Summit Group directives which, *inter alia*, includes the increase of interaction and cooperation among member countries in academic research and technological activities. The objective of the workshop was

for the participants to share information and expertise regarding Internet Studies in their countries and to explore possibilities for cooperation in the form of research exchanges and collaborative research projects. The fact that all members of the research group are active in policy and advocacy work in their respective home countries, it was felt, should ensure alignment between research outcomes and policy imperatives within each country. Two areas of close cooperation that emerged from the workshop were: (1) cooperating on developing distinctive Southern conceptions and measures of the information society, and (2) sharing experience and learning for national level Internet Governance Forum models, in which regard, the multi-stakeholder model of Brazil was appreciated as a useful benchmark.

IT for Change was asked to comment on the final report of the research project 'Mediating Voices and Communicating Realities – Using Information Crowd-sourcing Tools, Open Data Initiatives and Digital Media to Support and Protect the Vulnerable and Marginalised' coordinated by Evangelia Berdou, Research Fellow at the Institute for Development Studies, Sussex. Our commentary reflected on the notions of openness in a development context, and its potential for community action and reflection. We stressed the issue of ownership of ICT initiatives, and the problems that can surface in this regard between an external agent, who is often most interested in testing out a technology in a specific social setting, and development actors within the community, whose interests as well as orientations may differ greatly. We argued that the single most important success factor in ICT for development projects may be to appropriately manage these different kinds of orientations and expectations.

IT for Change has contributed a chapter on 'Establishing Publicness in the *Network*: New Moorings for Development' for a book on 'Open Development' edited by Matthew Smith of IDRC, Canada, and Katherine Reilly of Simon Fraser University, Canada, which will be published by MIT Press. The chapter is a critique of the concepts of 'openness' and 'open development' and argues how these ideas have been used in the information society discourse to subvert the traditional conceptions around publicness, through which the interests of marginalised sections have been protected in law and policy. Our submission hence is that the deep social shifts in the information society merit an exploration of new theoretical and practical directions for development. The concept of 'Network Public' is introduced and briefly described, as denoting the public aspects and parts of the *Network*, seen as both a new social paradigm and the dominant structural form of current and emerging times.

Financial Report

IT for Change Balance Sheet as on 31 March 2012								
31/03/11	Liabilities	31/03/12	% of total		31/03/11	Asset	31/03/12	% of total
Rs.		Rs.			Rs.		Rs.	
3,229,448	General Fund	3,881,433	37		683,724	Fixed Assets	831,215	8
3,489,578	Organisation Stabilisation Fund	4,078,327	39		19,234,978	Current Assets Loans and Advances	9,405,106	89
683,725	Asset Fund	831,215	8		3,119,482	Receivables	337,259	3
14,123,220	Advance Account	1,084,935	10					
1,512,213	Sundry Payables	697,670	7					
23,038,184	**Total**	**10,573,580**	**100**		**23,038,184**	**Total**	**10,573,580**	**100**

IT for Change Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2012							
31/03/11	Expenditure	31/03/12	% of total	31/03/11	Income	31/03/12	% of total
Rs.				Rs.			
7,885,820	Personnel Costs	8,333,450	42	17,066,240	Funds received	17,783,452	89
6,053,337	Operating Costs	8,610,156	43	885,044	Other Income	1,847,467	9
1,600,720	Administration Costs	1,972,925	10	250,172	Other Income- Depreciation transferred from Asset fund	412,014	2
364,849	Depreciation	412,014	2				
1,321,610	Excess of Income over Expenditure	604,388	3				
975,120	Appropriation towards Organisational Expenses	110,000	1				
18,201,456	**Total**	**20,042,933**	**100**	**18,201,456**	**Total**	**20,042,933**	**100**

Schedule of Funds Received and Utilised during the year 2011 – 2012						
Project	**Funder – Country**	**Opening Balance**	**Funds Received**	**Funds Utilised**	**% of Funds Utilised**	**Closing Balance**
Information Society for South Project	FORD Foundation - New York	2,630,958	-	2,197,984	11.3	432,974
Information Society for South Project	International Development Research Centre – Canada	581,524	1,399,158	1,980,682	10.2	-
Information Society for South Project	Humanist Institute for Cooperation with Developing Countries - Netherlands	890,452	-	890,452	4.6	-
Teachers Communities Of Learning	Cognizant Foundation – India, UNESCO – India and Edukans Foundation – Netherlands	695,854	1,422,125	1,330,824	6.9	787,155
Gender and Citizenship in the Information Society	International Development Research Centre – Canada	8,609,490	2,338,011	10,295,541	53.0	651,960
Developing a model for *Samudaya Jnana Kendras*	Karnataka *Jnana Ayoga* – Bengaluru, India	-	753,072	753,072	3.9	-
Several	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation – New Delhi, India, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex - Brighton, UK, European Union, Commission of the European Communities, Information Society And Media, United Nation's Children's Fund - India, European Association of Development Research and Training Institutes Kaiser-Friedrich- Strabe, Germany and United Nations Development Programme- New York, USA	714,942	1,258,472	1,973,414	10.2	-
Total		**14,123,220**	**7,170,838**	**19,421,969**	**100**	**1,872,089**

Annexures

Annexure 1. Workshops conducted on education and public software

Workshop title	Objective	Month	Participants
School Education – *Rashtriya Madhyamika Shiksha Abhiyan* - Subject Teacher Forum			
State Resource Persons – Science, Social Science and Mathematics Phase 1	Create State Resource Persons – Science, Social Science and Mathematics	June 2011	Government high school teachers
State Resource Persons – Science, Social Science and Mathematics Phase 2	Training programmes for State Resource persons – Science, Social Science and Mathematics	August 2011	Government high school teachers
State Resource Persons – Science and Mathematics Phase 3	Refresher training programmes	September 2011	Government high school teachers
State Resource Persons – Science, Social Science and Mathematics Phase 3	Training programmes for State Resource persons – Science, Social Science and Mathematics	December 2011	Government high school teachers
Master Resource Persons – Science, Social Science and Mathematics Batch 1	Create Master Resource Persons – Science, Social Science and Mathematics	December 2011	Government high school teachers
Master Resource Persons – Science, Social Science and Mathematics Batch 2	Training programmes for Master Resource persons – Science, Social Science and Mathematics	December 2011	Government high school teachers
Master Resource Persons – Mathematics Batch 1	Refresher training programmes	December 2011	Government high school teachers
Master Resource Persons – Science Batch 2	Refresher training programmes	January 2012	Government high school teachers
Subject Teacher Forum district cascade training workshops	Training programmes at the district level	January 2012	Government high school teachers in 14 districts across Karnataka. More than 50 workshops were conducted
Workshop for Art teachers	Discussion on NCF 2005 and ICT Phase 3 textbook	March 2012	Government high school teachers
Workshop in English	Preparation of English chapter for ICT Phase 3	March 2012	RIESI members
School Education – Teachers Communities of Learning			
Introduction to public software in education – Cognizant Foundation	Orientation to the programme	October 2011	Staff of Cognizant Foundation
Workshop on Record My Desktop	Dubbing and editing videos	December 2011	Government school teachers, volunteers from Cognizant Foundation
Workshop in computer literacy	Orientation to the programme, introduction to computer hardware and introduction to Tux typing	December 2011	Government school teachers
Workshop in basic computer literacy	Computer literacy including Internet use, emailing, efficient usage of school computer lab	March 2012	GHS Mallupura, Nanjangud
Workshop in basic computer literacy	Computer literacy including Internet use, emailing, efficient usage of school computer lab	March 2012	GHS Nelamangala
Teacher Education – *Samartha*			
Digital competencies mastery workshop	Computer literacy including Internet use, emailing	April 2011	Faculty from DIET Kumta
Hardware training	Hardware and software troubleshooting	July 2011	Faculty from DIET Kumta
Academic linkages / networking	Video conferencing and NCF 2005 discussion	August 2011	Faculty from DIET Kumta

Capacity building workshop on public software in education	Computer literacy including Internet use, emailing, Ubuntu certification	November 2011	Faculty from DIET Dharwad
Introduction to public software educational tools	To introduce constructive classroom processes using educational tools	December 2011	Faculty from DIET Kumta
Teacher Education – *Kalika Balaga*			
Public Software tools and methods	Refresher and advanced collaboration tools	May 2011	Management Development Programmes – C-LAMPS
ICTs and education	To integrate philosophies of learning, subject pedagogy and social impact of technology in education	October 2011	Management Development Programmes – C-LAMPS
Public Software tools and methods	Advanced training in use of tools to edit and manage audio and video material	December 2011	Management Development Programmes – C-LAMPS
Teacher Education – DIETs			
RV Education Consortium	Introduction to public software tools including office suite, Ubuntu and other educational tools	July 2011	DED faculty
Ubuntu installation and configuration	Ubuntu installation and Open Office for DIETs	December 2011	Faculty from DIETs all over Karnataka
Capacity building workshop for IT Academy	Planning IT Academy's annual work plan	March 2012	Faculty from DIETs
NGOs in Education			
Public educational Software tools and methods	Capacity building	September 2011	American India Foundation
Public Software tools and methods	Capacity building	November 2011	Vedanta Foundation
Higher Education			
Capacity building workshop for MEI Polytechnic	Introduction to public software tools including office suite, Ubuntu and other educational tools	July 2011	Faculty from the college
Capacity building workshop for MNTI Polytechnic	Introduction to public software tools including office suite, Ubuntu and other educational tools	December 2011	Faculty from the college
Knowledge Management Knowledge networking (NGOs)			
Capacity building workshop for public software adoption	Introduction to public software tools and using Scribus	April 2011	Concerned for Working Children
Capacity building workshop for NGOs for public software adoption	Advanced capacity building on Office Suite, Thunderbird, basics of Ubuntu, Inkscape and Scribus	August 2011	Group of NGOs
Capacity building workshop on Drupal	Basic training in setting up and using Drupal	December 2011 to January 2012	Group of NGOs
Capacity building workshop for NGOs for public software adoption	Introduction to public software tools	October 2011	*Makkala Jagriti*
Capacity building workshops on public software and Scribus	Introduction to public software tools and using Scribus	December 2011	Child Rights Trust
Capacity building workshops on Ubuntu, Drupal and Digital Storytelling	Learning to set up and use Drupal along with the basics of Ubuntu and digital storytelling	April 2011 to January 2012	Communication for development and learning

Annexure 2. Videos from *Prakriye* team

The Kishori Chitrapata *project developed modules for constructivist learning that included the following themes in addition to basic digi-cam training, handi-cam training and computer training.*

1. Identity - how identity gets constructed; being cognisant of the forces that shape identity

2. Sangha shakthi - *strength of a collective*

3. Livelihoods - exposure to opportunities in the local ecology

4. Gender and patriarchy - developing a critical perspective

5. The local panchayat *and government departments - becoming aware of exercising one's agency in engaging with local governance institutions*

***Kishori Chitrapata* films**		
S.No.	**Film Name**	**Comments**
1	We, the Camera and our Village	This film captures the journey of the *kishoris* experience of learning to take photographs using the digital camera and explore their village, i.e Hosavaranchi
2	My dream in the eye of the camera	*In this film, Kishoris* of Attiguppe share their experiences, of learning photography and exploring their village.
3	*Ilaakhe Namdu Hogona Banni*	The *kishoris* visited three departments: social welfare, CDPO, and the agriculture department. This exercise was to build awareness of the department and how to address issues that people from the village face.
4	*Nam Graamapanchaayatiyalli Naavu*	The *kishoris* visited the *gram panchayat*. They interviewed the officials there and asked about schemes available etc.
5	*Kaddi Muritiya Putta*	The *kishoris* wrote a script from a saying 'United we stand, divided we fall'. They also handled the camera while shooting this film.
6	*Bus Banthu*	In Hosavaranchi node, as part of *Sangha Shakthi* (Strength of a collective) module, *kishoris* were supposed to interview *sanghas* about their achievements. Upon learning about one such achievement on how the bus was brought to their village after much campaign, a role play of it was done.
7	*Nam Sanga Saadane*	This is a movie shot by the *kishoris.* It was part of their training to learn the achievements of the *sangha* women. Through the movie, the *kishoris* were told that they didn't need to be an important person to achieve things. *Sangha* women were interviewed in this movie.
8	*Nammura Photo Habba*	This movie was shot by the *Prakriye* team at the *kishoris* photo exhibition in Hosavaranchi. It includes footage of people from the village looking at the photos clicked by the *kishoris.*
9	*Sangha Seridre Upayoga*	This is a movie shot by *kishoris* about the benefits of being a part of a *sangha.*
10	*Sangad Bagge Nam Annadiru*	This is a movie about what the men in the village think of *sanghas.* A lot of positive things were spoken about how the village is known because of the *sanghas* and its women.
11	*Yuvakara Sangha*	This is a movie shot by *kishoris* about the youth club in the village.
12	*Sangha shakti*	This is a movie shot by *kishoris* about the benefits of *sangha.*
13	*Olle Sangha Andre*	This is a movie shot by *kishoris* about a model *sangha* by interviewing members and asking for their opinions.
14	*Namma Tarabeti*	The *kishoris* went to a neighbouring village to shoot a training given to Muslim women in designing.
15	*Nam Sahakara Nimagide*	This is a movie shot by k*ishoris* by interviewing *sangha* members. Through the interviews it emerged that the *sangha* women promised that they would help the *kishoris* in whichever way possible.

IT for Change Team

Bengaluru		Mysore	
Name	**Designation**	**Name**	**Designation**
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About IT for Change

IT for Change is an India-based NGO working on information society theory and practice from the standpoint of equity and social justice. Through our research, advocacy and field projects, we seek to challenge approaches that fail to address structural exclusions in the emerging information society. We also propose alternative models that are participatory and equitable. Our work spans a range of development arenas – gender, education, community media and governance.

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

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